Daily Report

East Europe

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Albania: Confirmed Attendance at Balkan Security Summit

AU2803212096 Tirana TVSH Television Network in Albanian 1900 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As you have been informed in our previous newscasts, upon Albania's initiative, which is contributing and is very interested in implementing security in the Balkan region, a conference, a ministerial meeting will be held in Tirana on 31 March to 1 April with defense ministers of the Southern Balkan countries. The meeting has aroused a lot of interest. The United States, Italy, Turkey, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia [FYROM], and Bulgaria have so far confirmed their participation in it. The participation of the Swiss defense minister has been also confirmed as representative of the presiding OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] country for 1996.

Albania: Pellumbi Reports to Socialist Party Congress

AU2703113796 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 24 Mar 96 pp 5-9

[Report by Deputy Chairman Servet Pellumbi to the Second Socialist Party Congress in Tirana on 24 March: "A New Role for the Socialist Party in the Country's Life"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Comrade delegates, honored friends and guests,

Today and tomorrow, all of us together will be protagonists at a historic moment, one of the most important events in the five-year life of the Socialist Party [PS] of Albania, its Second Congress. It is natural that our congress is being watched with interest. It is meeting, not only in order to review the road traveled since the First Congress, but to discuss and decide about the imminent future, to approve the electoral program and the strategy and tactics for victory in the parliamentary elections.

We thus have an opportunity to tell the 110,000 members of the PS, its many supporters, the Albanian electorate, representatives of other political forces, and guests from European social democratic and socialist parties who have honored us with their presence, that the PS during its four years in opposition has not stood on the sidelines during the difficult process of transition, but has taken an active part in them, also by reforming itself.

We Socialists are today in a position to provide clear security for the construction of a Western-style democratic society in Albania, and to provide an alternative that aims to change Albania's physiognomy, to cleanse the country of corruption, to employ people, and to make possible a better quality of life.

We are fully convinced that the Albanian electorate will support us with their votes. They have now received the message of democracy and are asking for changes. They aspire for a fairer, more open, and more vigorous society. We are providing them with the best alternative and with the encouragement and necessary tools to achieve such a thing.

It is a time for greater responsibilities for us.

The PS—Realistic Now and Optimistic for the Future

The PS was born as a new political force five years ago, at the time of the overthrow of the failed communist system of the "East European" type. It immediately took the lead in a transition that entwined measures to overcome a deep and total crisis with a strategy for reform and for laying the foundations of a democratic society.

The four years that have passed since the First Congress have been a time of extremely intensive political activity. We were obliged to confront not only a kind of inertia inherited from the past, but pressure brought to bear on us from the right that equated us with a communist-style party and fought against us as such, forcing us into denying everything in the past, including even the National Liberation War, as a condition for us to take our seats at the "table" of pluralism.

The truth is that we were able to rise above these pressures because we did not shirk an objective and critical examination of the recent and distant past. By sharply condemning the communist regime, its political, social, and economic methods, the country's isolation, the savage class struggle, the dictatorship, and the oppression of the individual, we unequivocally rejected the practices of the party-state and of Enver Hoxha's dictatorship.

The PS is not at any single point reconciled with the communism which was the subject of an experiment in Albania for almost half a century. We respond without a qualm to the attacks of those who attempt to equate the PS with the Albanian Workers Party [PPSh] with an "Eastern mentality," or "Enverism" by saying that we Socialists, neither individually nor gathered in the PS, do not carry any more or any less responsibility and still less guilt for the recent or distant historical past. We have been democratic participants in democratic processes that have now been completed.

As in other countries of what was East Europe, right-wing anticommunist forces emerged among us too as

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the totalitarian regime was overthrown. However, we stand by the theory that the achievements on the road of democracy are to the credit of all the political forces and above all to the willpower of all Albanians in advancing on this road. The PS as a left-wing democratic force had its own important role to play in dismantling the communist dictatorship, and in averting uncontrolled social conflicts as the most sensitive phase of transition. We Socialists acted as honest patriots and intellectuals and as realistic and brave politicians.

Our move into opposition after the elections of 22 March 1992 gave us the opportunity to devote ourselves to the organization and reform of our party, to preparing new politicians able to find their way in the maze of contradictions and evils of transition to social democracy. During four years in opposition, the PS created stable structures, extending them nationwide. Distinguished among them was the Eurosocialist Youth Forum [FRESSH], a vigorous and promising organization of the PS, which deserved its admission to the Socialist Youth International and the EU Socialist Youth Organization. The Socialist Women's Forum grew stronger and expanded throughout the country. A clear and tangible alternative was drawn up, entirely different from that of right-wing forces. This was significantly improved as the "Basic Program" and "PS Statute," at the PS Second National Conference in February 1994.

All these things permit us to conclude that our being in opposition and the bitterness of the struggle waged against us by right-wing forces have not cowed us but have enabled us to accomplish the full cycle of social-democratic reforms, which constitutes an achievement and serious "investment" for the future.

Aware that we represent a legitimate opposition that is of vital importance for democracy, we have been at pains to take active and constructive stands. This has first of all been evident in the PS's parliamentary activity, its contribution to the legislative field, its support for market economy reforms, and its parliamentary struggle against incompetent government and corruption, which had begun to assume alarming proportions. Second, it was evident in the field of local government, in which the PS became the leading party after the elections of 26 July 1992. Our representatives in local government have had to cope with the inevitable pressure of the electorate and their grievances and worries, but also with pressure that came from a tendency toward a suffocating centralism that the Meksi Government could not shake off. The PS's work in local government has now become convincing proof of its ability to govern. Third, the PS's political activity has always been in accordance with the law and with democratic means and methods, although the rights of the opposition and especially the constitutional right to peaceful assemblies and protests have been systematically violated by some segments of the state.

We have lacked experience in opposition, and have suffered from shortcomings in our political initiative and action; in cooperation; in our positions of partnership with other political forces, the trade unions, and governmental and nongovernmental associations; and in our parliamentary control. We can nevertheless assert with conviction that we have performed our task as a genuine opposition increasingly well. The credibility that the PS and its parliamentary group have earned is not accidental, and it has not been achieved by standing back and criticizing the mistakes of the ruling party and its government.

No to the Strategy of Political and Social Tension as a Tool of Power

It is regrettable that the PS was never accepted by the ruling PD [Democratic Party] and the president of the republic as a competing political force and protagonist, but only as an enemy and a destructive opposition. This created a somewhat paradoxical situation: The message of social peace, understanding, and democratic cooperation, instead of coming from the government, as is usually the case, came from the opposition.

The ruling PD intentionally created situations of conflict with the opposition as a whole and the Socialist opposition in particular. With the arrest of the deputy Fatos Nano, our party chairman, on 30 July 1993, without supporting facts or evidence and in violation of the most elementary legal procedure, it became clear that the PD leadership would replace dialogue with a series of political trials for reasons of political revenge. The purpose was to strike at the PS, and to split it or if possible eliminate it from the country's political life. The ideas of "better without an opposition" and "We don't need pluralism any more" began to enter circulation.

Swept up by megalomania and by their single-party patterns of thought, the PD did not even wish to heed the message of the 70,000 people who gathered in a mass rally in Tirana on 30 July 1993, or that of the 700,000 Albanians who signed the petition for the release of Fatos Nano. They maintained and still maintain such an attitude in the teeth even of the familiar and repeated resolutions of the European Parliament, the Interparliamentary Union, the Council of Europe, Amnesty International, and the U.S. State Department, which have called the arrest and imprisonment of our party chairman an act of political revenge on the part of Berisha's regime.

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Fatos Nano's stalwart attitude, his farsightedness, and his sense of principle in the struggle for genuine democracy, his exposure of Berisha's scenarios, and his contempt for additional privations in prison have been a source of inspiration and mobilization for our party in order to confront difficult situations and to triumph over all the challenges and plots hatched by the PD leadership.

In such a difficult struggle involving more stabs in the back than frontal assaults, our party with its correct and balanced stands and its strategy of disabling, step by step, the PD's strategy of tension, which has been promoted by the president of the republic himself, has secured the political initiative by concentrating on such major issues for Albanian democracy as the protection of democratic institutions from authoritarianism, nepotism, and tribalism and the defense of human rights and freedoms. Its aim has been to transform itself into a democratic movement of the entire people, and to prepare and approve the constitution by a democratic procedure. We have also seen the "Nano case" as an issue affecting not only our party or "Nano the citizen," but, as what it has been in fact, a political issue of principled importance for Albanian democracy and relations between the government and the opposition. This has elevated our party's entire struggle to the level of principle, and has avoided the danger of a lapse into populism that was encouraged by the high social cost of the reform and the massive disillusionment of the electorate when the PD Government not only failed to honor its promises but plunged into corruption, contraband, and scandal.

The struggle for the constitution essentially turned into a battle to reject the strategy of tension and the reduction of democratic elbowroom to critical limits, and to say no to tendencies and practices that were moving toward a form of constitutionally endorsed personal power. The victory achieved on 6 November 1994 and the lineup of 16 political forces to say no to Berisha's draft constitution was a new and positive phenomenon showing that there was a future for democracy in Albania and that no reversion to any kind of authoritarianism or totalitarianism was permissible.

It was expected that the PD leaders would learn a lesson and would reconsider their strategy. However, no such thing occurred. They continued to behave in the opposite way to that suggested by logic, the objective course of events, and the democratic aspirations of the Albanian electorate. They persisted, in panic, in a spiraling strategy of tension conceived as a way of distracting people's attention from the PD's failures and from the woes and privations of daily life and as a means of replacing government with domination.

People were seeking answers to acute questions of why the country remained in a state of economic and political collapse, why promises had not been kept, why the country remained without a constitution, why there was no struggle against corruption, and why a stop was not put to the plunder of assets through privatization that often resembled a thieves' bazaar. Why was production still paralyzed and why were people obliged to risk their lives in the waves of the sea and the mountain chasms in search of work abroad. Why were foreign aid and the remittances of refugees misused, and why was there a delay in Albania's further integration in Europe?

Under such circumstances, the entire period from the referendum down to the present day has been marked by a bitter political conflict between forces which, regardless of the positions they occupy in the political spectrum, are seriously concerned about the future of democracy and the reforms in Albania on one hand, and the PD on the other hand, alone and isolated with its strategy of creating tension. The effects of this contradiction are evident within the PD itself in the form of wars among clans, and on the surface in the shape of a range of antidemocratic and even anticonstitutional initiatives, whose entire purpose is to enable the PD to cling to power at all costs, even after the expiry of its four-year mandate.

The PD wielders of power and the president of the republic himself are openly introducing political apartheid into political life. This is evident from the changes in legal procedure introduced last July in order to keep Fatos Nano in prison, the siege of the Court of Cassation and the dismissal of Mr. Brozi in violation of the constitution and for political reasons, and in the drafting and approval by the majority of the Antigenocide law and the Law on Screening Politicians last autumn, whose purpose was to deprive a range of personalities of the opposition, well known as political opponents of the regime, of the right to be candidates for posts as deputies.

The PS, even though it never ceased to set examples of tolerance, balance, and political flexibility, could not reconcile itself to an atmosphere of insecurity and suspicion, and could not conform to demagogy, high-handedness, and the presidential policy of get in line or get out, with its flagrant violations of human rights, its imprisonment of members of the opposition and representatives of the free press, and its political apartheid and patronage. We sent out clear messages of the major dangers that such an escalation of this strategy of tension involved.

As we expected, the reaction was a new campaign against the PS, with floods of insults, accusations, and

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diversionary scenarios with fascist-style threats such as, You will see on 3 April, No appeal to your verdict, March and the start of April will see the end of you, etc., etc. According to them, the PS is heading for dissolution and is split, sometimes into Marxists and antimarxists, sometimes into conservatives and Maleshovites [reference to Sejfullah Maleshova, communist politician of immediate postwar years], into Westerners and Easterners, or sometimes into fundamentalists and terrorists on one hand and reformers and peacelovers on the other.

This would have been only half as bad, had this campaign been confined to a propaganda war of words. However, it began to be accompanied by acts designed to raise the strategy of tension into a strategy of general fear. For this purpose, the chosen means was to incriminate the opposition, which began to be labeled as a Red front. Berisha used the ugly terrorist act of 26 February, which claimed the lives of innocent people, to accuse the so-called Red front.

The scenario was the same as before 22 March 1992. In essence, its purpose was to hold the 1996 elections too under the slogan of the struggle against the communist peril, against the Red front, and against the Enverists, terms used generally to label not only the PS but any opposition force.

The aim was to tell people at home and abroad that, if they did not vote for Berisha and his clan, there would be no stability in Albania or the Balkans and Albania would become the East! For this purpose, the so-called Serbian finance for the PS was invented. We have determinedly rejected this, shortly and simply, as a mafia-style and deeply anti-Albanian slander, calculated to influence the naive and incriminated persons within the PD.

We cannot rule out other scenarios of this kind being set in motion by the PD rulers in the near future, in order to isolate the PS, to obstruct its strategy and tactics, and to scare and deter its possible partners, and, above all, its massive and stable electorate. However, such bitter forms of political struggle have never swayed the PS and the electorates confidence in it and the alternative it represents.

General Elections—A Decisive Constitutional Step To Draw the Country Out of Crisis

The Albanian political forces and the electorate are embarking on pluralist parliamentary elections for the third time in five years. On every occasion, the situation has been tense and fraught with threats of violence and ballot-rigging. There are explanations for this, general and specific.

Objectively, the country needs stability, higher production and economic effectiveness, employment, and an easing of social tensions. Victory will go to the political force that offers the electorate a realistic alternative and creates the confidence that is capable of carrying it out. This logic, which has operated as an objective mechanism in all the transitional countries of the former East Europe in which left-wing and center forces have come to power, is expected to operate in Albania too.

We think that this is connected not with East-West geography,, nor even with the fact that people in societies in transition like our own are now long weary of anticommunist rhetoric, but because such forces as the PD have not been able to draw up a creative and constructive alternative in these new conditions, but have remained hostages to the past. The totalitarian mentality, for whose overthrow they struggled not without success in Albania too, seriously infected them themselves, because their clocks stopped at the start of the processes that the great upheavals of the nineties inaugurated.

As a result, the right (the PD) turned out a failure, confused, unbalanced, impoverished in ideas, and unable to harmonize its disgust at the past with a program for the future. It is this failed political philosophy that has generated the crisis of the government of transition and is paralyzing Albanian politics, just like in the second half of the eighties.

Under such circumstances, we are obliged to admit that the crisis cannot be solved and political and economic stagnation cannot be overcome unless the PD is dislodged from power by the free vote of the people. There can be no social peace and stability in Albania without eliminating the strategy of tension and the concepts and practices of Berisha's clan, which are inciting hatred among the Albanians and dividing them into antagonistic camps to the point when they are divided into internal occupiers and liberators, who use different alphabets.

Realistic analyses of the situation that has been created in the country, carried out not only by ourselves, show that the PD has an urgent need to free itself from the aftertaste of single-party rule, and needs to reorganize and reform itself as a modern European party. Its relegation to the opposition would be for its own good and the good of democracy in Albania. The victory of the PS and the opposition in the parliamentary elections has therefore become an imperative demand in order to defend democracy and its achievements, to give a second wind to the market economy reforms, to expand and guarantee human rights and freedoms, to enable

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the rule of law to genuinely operate, and to bring the country a constitution.

We call on all the Albanian electorate to become aware of and to really understand the essence of the situation that the country and Albanian democracy are facing. With such a realistic vision and a sense of historical responsibility, we are putting forward today the essence and basic objectives of our electoral platform and of our democratic dedication to the future.

We Offer the Albanian Electorate a Realistic and Sure Alternative

Comrade delegates,

In our electoral platform and objectives, we do not start from the principle of offering everybody everything. Nor are we offering a simple administrative solution. We are proposing a positive left-wing alternative in order to extract the country from its crisis and to put it on the road of stable and progressive development. We are for a free, fair, and democratic society based on a market economy, social equilibrium, the rule of law, political pluralism, pluralism of ownership, respect for human rights and freedoms, and a guarantee of a higher quality of life for its own citizens.

The PS Toward New Developments in Albanian Democracy

Albanian society still suffers from a lack of democracy and strong democratic culture. Under a Socialist government, the will of the majority but also the rights of the minority will be respected. Respect for the rights of the opposition and open dialogue with it will be a basic principle of the government's work.

We aim at effective, transparent, and professionally capable government, in order to open the path to the free initiative of Albanians and all who want to cooperate with Albania. We will make a government for the Albanians and not for the government's own members. The PS is assured support on a broad social basis, and is therefore open to cooperation and coalitions on the basis of policies.

The PS guarantees effective local self-government in accordance with the basic demands of local autonomy as expressed in the European Charter, and will guarantee the autonomy of local government administration, assets, and finance.

The PS favors the rule of law and a restructuring of the procurators office and the organs of the judiciary. It supports the independence of the judiciary, as guaranteed by the constitutional law. We will put a final end to the practices of the party-state and will ensure the real separation and independence of powers.

From the rostrum of this congress, we turn to all our members and supporters and the entire Albanian electorate to say that the PS offers you an alternative that guarantees public peace and order. We support the idea that there is no genuine freedom without guaranteed security in all places. We propose to set as priorities the struggle against corruption and against crime in general, including such new forms of crime as illegal trafficking, drugs, prostitution, and terrorism. Besides other means, we will attach importance to restructuring the forces of order, providing a police force that will be close to the people and better equipped.

The PS is committed to a modern administration built according to rigorous professional criteria, able to effectively and impartially apply the policies of the state.

The guarantee and defense of people's basic freedoms and rights will be the primary duty of the Socialist government. We will ratify, respect, and implement the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the documents of the OSCE [Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe] and the conventions of the Council of Europe. The Socialist Party is committed to there not being any victims of persecution or political prisoners in Albania. At the same time, the PS will work for the full integration of the genuine victims of the political persecution of the totalitarian regime and to fulfilling their interests in accordance with democratic laws and principles.

The PS is committed to creating room for the work and activities of intellectuals, and will properly value their work in accordance with their worth and productivity. We will respect and implement the rights and the status of war veterans, invalids of war and labor, civil servants, pensioners, and all social categories that deserve a special status. The PS will give powerful support to the activities of nongovernmental organizations.

The PS will respect the rights of minorities in accordance with the demands of the United Nations Charter and other internationally recognized documents.

We Socialists consider peace and social solidarity to be a major national duty. We will eliminate every divisive tendency of a political, religious, regional, and ethnic nature. The PS considers political struggle as the free and democratic competition of alternatives in a pluralist society.

In order to perform its political duties, the PS will follow the path of supporting the democratic laws approved by the Albanian parliament and will annul, change, or amend those laws whose antidemocratic

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character has paved the way for neototalitarian ideas and practices in Albania, for regional and social divisions, and persecution and revenge for political motives. We will complete Albania's legislation for the normal functioning of the rule of law. The PS considers the drafting and approval of a modern constitution to be an urgent task for this purpose. Our aim is for the constitution to be approved on the broadest possible social basis and through democratic procedures.

The Socialist Alternative Brings Employment, Property, Economic Growth, Solidarity, and Security

After four years of PD government that began with shock therapy, our country's economy has not been able to emerge from its crisis, despite some undeniable achievements especially at a macroeconomic level. It has been transformed from a production economy without a market into a market economy without production. As a result, the gross domestic product and the real incomes of the population remain below the levels of 1990. The PD promised to privatize the economy and distributed national assets on the basis of party allegiance. It promised employment and closed enterprises. It promised organized emigration and abandoned its own citizens. It promised free business and sowed corruption. It promised a financial system and active banks and transformed them into tools for its political purposes. The PD government bears a heavy responsibility for opening the gates to the massive destruction and theft of national assets through lawless privatization.

As for us Socialists, we declare that economic logic will rule our policies. We have drawn up a clear and sure medium-term strategy that aims to quickly extract the economy from its crisis, to ensure high rates of development, and to establish a social market economy securely integrated in the European economy.

Realizing this strategic objective will mean restructuring the economy, and establishing a proper balance between market forces and state intervention and between the private and public sectors. From the rostrum of this congress, we commit ourselves to guaranteeing an annual rate of development for the country's economy of 8 to 12 percent every year. The PS guarantees that inflation will be kept under control, the balance of trade will be improved, and the domestic budget deficit will be reduced to between 4 and 6 percent of the gross domestic product.

In order to meet its strategic medium-term objectives, the PS will rely first of all on restructuring and reactivating traditional sectors and on the country's potential for development. Our priorities will be large-scale agriculture, light industry, tourism, the production of construction materials, and the effective management of our mineral and energy resources.

Second, private property will be strengthened and small and medium-sized businesses will be continually supported and encouraged. Third, the active financial and banking system will be restructured and developed. The financial markets and the banks will undertake the financing of the development of the economy and will put to work the money capital that is lying idle in our economy. For this purpose, we will also support and encourage the creation of private banks. Fourth, the state in its role as regulator will use financial mechanisms to encourage sectors with business prospects, eliminating bureaucratic interference in public services, correcting distortions in the economy, and ensuring fair shares for culture, education, and health, etc.

We will ask the next parliament to approve at an early stage an overall law on the privatization of the economy, in order to extend it in a multitude of forms to all sectors of the economy, with an emphasis on mass privatization. Appreciating the role of bonds in the process of privatization and in making a majority of the population stockholders, the PS will put an end to the dilatoriness that has occurred and will speed up the creation, development, and modernization of the financial market, the capital market, and the bond market.

The PS will support an effective taxation system that will help to revive the country's economy, encourage production and investment, stimulate production, and alleviate social problems. The PS will complete and enforce tax laws in order to further tighten financial discipline and control, in order to reduce to a minimum tax evasion, corruption, and cases of illegal enrichment.

We declare that we will work to harmonize better increasing costs with rising wages and a growth in the gross domestic product.

In realizing its program and strategy, the PS relies on the Albanian's labor and on investments, but also on securing dignified and open cooperation with financial and monetary institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the PNUD, and the relevant organizations of the EU. We will make it possible soon to sign an agreement of association with the EU.

The development of the infrastructure is one of the greatest challenges that the Socialists aim to confront on the threshold of the new millennium. The PS proposes to carry out three major programs of urban and rural development. These programs will aim to quickly

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overcome critical problems of an emergency nature that face the country's fast and stable economic and social development.

In the course of four years, these programs will involve the investment of about 160 billion leks. These programs will aim to restructure and repair the country's main roads; to expand and modernize the ports, Rinas Airport, and the border crossing points; to revive rail transportation; to expand and improve the reliability of energy sources; and to expand and modernize the telecommunications network.

Among other things, our program aims to stabilize electricity supplies to the towns within one year, to overcome the critical situation of water supplies to the towns within two years, to achieve a fast solution to the problem of heating for the population, and to guarantee the repair and surfacing of city streets.

The Complex Development of the Countryside: A Priority for Our Country

The countryside today, because of the many changes that have taken place and the privatization of the land, constitutes a complex problem with extremely disturbing symptoms that require immediate intervention. The PS has drawn up a complex program for the economic, social, and cultural development of the countryside and its infrastructure, for the movement of the population, and for changes in its way of life in the direction of urbanization. The PS Program aims to apply the Land Law fairly and conclusively, to encourage agricultural production and to protect it from competition from imported agricultural and meat and dairy products, to create a taxation system that will stimulate free initiative in the countryside, and to obtain export quotas and import licenses from the EU, in order to enable a share of the profits to pass into the hands of peasant traders.

The Socialist Government will exempt from taxation all peasant families whose incomes are below subsistence level. The tax system in agriculture will serve to encourage investment and to increase agricultural, meat, and dairy production. We will increase financial aid, loans, and fuel subsidies for peasant families with little land and who are in difficult regions such as mountain farms in general and farms in the northeast in particular. We will capably and realistically compensate former owners of agricultural land and bring to an end the dilatoriness in distributing the assets of the former agricultural cooperatives.

The PS's agrarian program focuses upon extracting agriculture as fast as possible from its primitive state and setting it on the path toward modernization. Investments will be made to rehabilitate the irrigation and drainage system and soil improvement schemes will provide protection from floods. The state will shoulder all the expenditure to protect crops and livestock from epidemics.

We Socialists will stimulate the creation of private association for credit, marketing, and the development of small-scale industry for the processing of agricultural, meat, and dairy products. The association's contracts for the procurement and collection of production will include incentives and guarantees from the state. We say to peasants and farmers that these are appropriate ways to protect their interests and to rescue them from speculators. The PS will assist and support the free movement of the population, especially peasants, according to a studied urban policy.

We will determinedly work to establish urban amenities in the countryside and to improve the infrastructure and essential services. We say there is a need to include the peasantry and former employees of state farms in social welfare programs and we will increase the pensions of peasants in order to narrow the sharp divisions that exist today, as well as to reward more realistically those who are now peasant pensioners for their contribution to the national economy.

Our Commitment to and Investment in Human Beings

In contrast to the ruling PD, which, although a right-wing force, occasionally mentions the social market economy and the welfare state for demagogic purposes, although it in fact excludes such things, we Socialists base our alternative on the model of the social market economy, which unites in a single whole economic effectiveness with social welfare for everybody. If the right wing sees social justice as a kind of luxury, it is for us a vital premise for an effective society and social peace.

During this difficult transition period, the PD has followed a deeply antisocial policy and has created serious distortions, contradictions, and acute social problems that have left people weary, annoyed, disillusioned, and disgusted. Unemployment has reached a peak and is at present twice the published figure. The overwhelming majority of wages paid are below subsistence level. Pensioners in the towns but especially in the countryside have suffered significant declines in their pensions. The social welfare network is especially weak and as result 20 percent of Albanians live on social assistance.

We Socialists will give priority to reducing social inequalities through social solidarity, increasing the level of prosperity of the majority of the population and improving social welfare for those on the fringes of so-

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ciety, such as the poor, the elderly, and the disabled. Stimulating employment, increasing wage rates and employment as a whole, strengthening the social insurance system and the health service, and providing economic aid will be priority objectives in the PS's social policy in the next four years.

We declare that our aim is to reduce the real level of unemployment by creating an average of 50,000-60,000 jobs every year. In job creation, priority will be given to the employment and reemployment of highly qualified specialists through the reorganization of research and academic institutions, in accordance with the conditions of the market economy.

We value economic emigration, organized by the state or privately, as an opportunity for employment and training and for increasing family and national earnings, and we will therefore make every effort with the governments of the relevant countries, especially Greece and Italy, to reach contracted agreements on the basis of familiar international documents.

A fair pay policy will aim at eliminating all wages that are below a subsistence level within one year. The Council of Ministers will be entrusted by law with indexing pay rates according to inflation twice a year.

The immediate social security policy will aim at reviewing as soon as possible pensions both in the towns and the countryside, with the aim of increasing their average level faster than inflation. Pensions for special merits will be granted according to criteria prescribed by law, avoiding all political and party discrimination. Veterans of the National Liberation War will enjoy special treatment according to the law, which will be amended following their criticisms.

Human life will be at the center of the PS's social policy. The party has therefore compiled a program of measures to set in motion the segments of the state that cover health care, involving prophylactic measures against diseases, mass vaccination, hygiene regulations, medical care in the workplace, and health education. Health insurance, subsidies for medicines, and a preferential health policy for children, the disabled, veterans, and retirees will be a priority in the PS program.

The PS's alternative aims at more investment in education, culture, science, and environmental protection. We will carry out the reform and modernization of the educational system, physically and structurally rehabilitating schools throughout the country, preventing and averting all signs of illiteracy, and giving teachers and lecturers the respect and the moral, legal, and financial appreciation they deserve.

Realistically appreciating the role of culture, literature, the arts, and sport in emancipating society and cultivating democracy, the PS has prepared a detailed program for their fast development.

We Want Albania Integrated With Dignity in European-Atlantic Structures

Albania's faster integration in Europe will be the keystone to our foreign policy in the next four years. There is no alternative to this.

Through its realistic and active foreign policy, the PS aims to secure for Albania an international position that will give it broad scope for action, enabling the country to free itself from directionless policies and signs that Albania is being discounted and isolated again. Priorities of this policy will be the defense of integrity and sovereignty, national freedom and independence, the country's stable economic and social development, international support for the national cause, good-neighborliness, effective and dignified integration in Europe, and open and active cooperation in international organizations. The PS will support the country's defense and security through a peaceful foreign policy closely tied to the structures of collective euro-atlantic security. It supports Partnership for Peace and aims at hastening Albania's admission to NATO.

The PS will strive to eliminate the symptoms of a policy of conflict, quarrels, chilliness, and signs of distrust in relations with our neighbors. It welcomes initiatives and agreements that aim to guarantee peace in southeast Europe and is committed to an active role in expanding bilateral and reviving multilateral cooperation. The PS will develop relations of good-neighborliness that serve peace and stability in the region and the free movement of people, ideas, and goods. It will view the conduct of these relations in close connection with the respect for the legitimate national and human rights of the Albanians living in their ethnic territories.

The defense and solution of the national question, which has its roots in an inherited historical injustice, has been at the focus of the PS's attention and will remain so throughout its period in government. The PS will support active peaceful movements, initiatives, and alternatives for the solution of the national question launched by the Albanians in Kosova, Macedonia, Montenegro, and in other ethnic territories that are in accordance with their legitimate interests, their political will, and international documents and principles. It defends the right of the people of Kosova to self-determination, which, we are convinced, does not conflict with the principles of the OSCE and international negotiations on the Balkan crisis. In the situation in which the Kosova issue finds

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itself today, the PS supports dialogue between the Albanians and the Serbs in the presence of a third party. The PS will work for the defense of the historic, national, and property rights of the Cam population in accordance with democratic thinking and international practices.

The PS will ensure the active commitment of the Albanian government and its diplomacy to strengthening ties with the diaspora and Albanians wherever they are, cultivating their language, culture, traditions, and customs in the interests of national issues and of Albania's prosperity. It will work to promote the more active and tangible participation of the diaspora in deepening the reform and in the country's economic and cultural development.

With the aim of hastening Albania's integration in international political and economic organizations such as the Council of Europe, the EU, the European Parliament, the IMF, the World Bank, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, etc. [sentence as published] An active diplomacy will similarly aim at continually developing relations of good-neighborliness and cooperation with Greece and Italy as adjacent countries and EU members, and with important partners in the EU such as Germany, France, Britain, etc.

The PS will secure broader support for Albania's economic and social development, creating legal conditions and confidence for the growth of foreign investments in Albania. Special importance will be attached to further developing comprehensive friendly relations with the United States.

The PS will secure the active development of Albania's relations with states such as Canada, Japan, China, Russia, and all countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Arab countries, to mutual benefit.

We will respect the agreements and friendly relations that have been achieved with well-known international bodies, European countries, the United States, etc, in the interests of Albania's economic and social development.

The PS, as a party of the new European left, will deepen its cooperation with all progressive political forces in Europe and the world, especially socialist and social democratic parties, and the Socialist Internationale.

The PS Will Win the Elections

Comrade delegates, the PS is fully prepared to enter the elections and to win. On behalf of the General Management Committee, allow me to declare the PS's basic objective in the parliamentary elections: The PS will achieve its political victory in the new general elections with more than 50 percent of the votes, to form a successful and stable government for the country and to fulfill the Albanians' aspirations for genuine democracy and prosperity. Our message is: Unite with us for genuine democracy! I express the conviction that this message has the support of yourselves, of all our members and supporters, and of the overwhelming majority of the Albanian electorate.

The prestige of the Socialist Party has been growing. We have not drawn away from people, and they have not drawn away from us. There is a noticeable flood of members of the middle strata of society, young people, women, and intellectuals, into the structures of our party. The PS electorate, in contrast to that of many other political parties, is growing at an exponential rate, forming concentric circles. On the basis of such objective tendencies and the soundings conducted by the PS's Sociology Department, we are convinced of the Albanian electorate's widespread support for the PS. Votes for the PS will come from:

—All those who believe in the alternatives of the new social democratic left;

—All employees of the former state enterprises who were thrown onto the streets by the savage PD reforms;

—All employees of the state administration and institutions who have been called enemies of democracy under the notorious Clause 24/1;

—All servicemen dismissed from the Army as unreformed and left without economic protection; and

—All those civil servants who have lined up with the right wing solely in order to preserve their jobs and keep themselves in bread;

—All those who thought they would benefit from privatization, but were left stranded by the PD's Privatization Boards;

—The overwhelming majority of the peasantry, who, although they received land in 1991, are still not in any position to cope with the severe demands of primitive agriculture and the competition of foreign products;

—Hundreds of thousands of pensioners, who can hardly subsist and feel abandoned by the state, which has discounted their sacrifices, efforts, and the sweat they have expended;

—Intellectuals ignored, persecuted, and trampled upon by the PD;

—All those young people, including those who will vote for the first time, who in today's reality see no prospects of employment, education, or assimilation into modern culture, and in despair seek to find these things abroad;

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—All those women who were the first victims of unemployment and were rigidly excluded from social and political life, and have been housebound.

—All those businessmen or honest citizens who disagree with and are worried by the extent of the corruption in the administration and among members of the government;

—All those emigrants and their families who have been disappointed by the state's support for them;

—All those veterans and families of martyrs of the National Liberation War who have not only not been treated with respect by the state today, but have seen how yesterday's collaborators with fascism have been decorated and have gained rewards and status before them;

—All those former proprietors who were promised the restitution of property, but who have been fended off with words and promises for four years;

—All those who have suffered under the savage violence of the police and the high-handedness of the administration and the judiciary;

—All those who cannot reconcile themselves to the signs of totalitarianism and tribalism in the institutions of the state today.

We might continue, because there are many such people, and they make up the majority of the disillusioned Albanian electorate. They have seen the PD give the opportunities of democracy to some, but not to all. They all formed the majority that said No to Berisha on 6 November 1994.

This country needs to use its entire strength. In contrast to the PD, which showed itself unable to cooperate not only with the forces of the opposition but with its own allies of the coalition of 22 March 1992, we Socialists consider preelectoral cooperation on the basis of partnership with other political forces, especially the Democratic Alliance, the Social Democratic Party, the Agrarian Party, the Human Rights Union, the National Unity Party, the Popular Party, etc. to be an important strategic issue for the future.

The priorities we use as our starting point are:

First: We aim together with other political forces to secure genuinely free elections, and correctness in the administration of the votes of the people.

Second, we will jointly defeat the PD in the electoral race by securing two-thirds of the next parliament, in order to give the country a constitution.

Third, we will pave the way for a postelectoral coalition, a formula of government with the broadest possible social basis, which, in our view, would be the best form of government responding to the special transitional needs of the present stage of Albanian democracy.

The fear of such a vision that has gripped the PD leadership, which has labeled every initiative of this kind as the creation of a Red front shows that the PD has lagged behind in its conception and practice of modern democracy, which include understanding, cooperation, compromise, coalitions, and alliances. The attacks mounted against us do not shake us in our efforts to finds means of cooperation, for which we look for your support. We will be flexible with our possible partners.

Our indisputable advantage lies in the fact that we will make the present government accountable to the electorate for everything that it promised in 1992, for its incompetence and its mistakes in governing the country, its divisive policies, and the runaway abuses and corruption of those in power. These are questions in which the Albanian electorate is interested and which require an answer that will not be found in the endless tales about the 50 years of communist government, which the PD wishes to use in the election campaign.

We are optimistic of victory, but not euphoric. We are aware that we must confront the media, which have become a mouthpiece of the ruling party, using deceit, violence, diversion, and disinformation in their attempt to manipulate votes and trample on the will of the people. We will be up against the strategy of police terror and fear. However, we are thoroughly prepared to triumph over this complicated but utterly discredited strategy.

In order to win and defend the votes of the people, the PS is prepared to wage a serious and positive election campaign, in which we will rely on the broad distribution and organizational strength of our party throughout the country, on the experience in election campaigns garnered in the past four years, and on the experience and assistance of our sister left-wing parties and other foreign institutions.

We have the experience of long, careful work done in committees created at headquarters and in the districts, with the best specialists in every field. Our messages and proposals that will be carried to the electorate through the work of our candidates for posts as deputies, our groups of activists who will help them, and our party leaders at headquarters and in the districts will be tangible and inspiring. We will use every means of communicating with the electorate, from house-to-house meetings and discussions to organized meetings with voters. Different forms of political marketing will be

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used to support these activities and to display the main ideas of the campaign.

The main aim in defining how the election campaign will be organized is that the party's 4,052 organizations, its 450 constituency committees, not to mention the PS forums in the districts, will position themselves as closely to the electorate as possible. The heartland of the campaign will be the constituencies. Special organizations will therefore be created at constituency level, on which much the greatest part of our resources will be concentrated. We will be able to organize and assign tasks to the entire party membership, powerfully supported by the Eurosocialist youth movement, the Socialist Women's Forum, and our party's many other supporters.

Comrade delegates,

The messages and ideas of the PS Second Congress are messages of victory in the forthcoming elections. The Albanian electorate will unite with us Socialists for a genuine democracy, in order to carry forward the reforms and the market economy, to change Albania's appearance, and to accelerate Albania's dignified integration in European and Atlantic structures. We know how to win the votes that belong to us. We will be able to defend the will of the people.

Albania: Socialist Congress Issues Electoral Message

AU2703164796 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 26 Mar 96 pp 3-5

[Electoral message of the Socialist Party, issued at the Second Socialist Party Congress in Tirana on 24 March: "Together With Us for Genuine Democracy! Vote for the Socialist Party"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The new parliamentary elections give the Socialist Party [PS] the opportunity to establish a dialogue with the country, to speak to it and listen to it. We Socialists are standing before our fellow countrymen with a political and moral obligation: We want to build an Albania fully cured of harmful dictatorial disease and the antidemocratic distortions of transition. We want a normal Albania.

The PS feels a deep obligation in this aim. It appeals to everybody: Unite for democracy! At the same time, it guarantees its stand for a loyal, competitive political struggle, mutual respect for the institutions of the rule of law, and respect between the government and the opposition. We will not tolerate and will never reconcile ourselves to the tensions and distortions that have appeared in Albanian political life. We aim at a civilized society that will see an end to:

—Political revenge;

—Intolerance and an inability to enter dialogue;

—Self-isolating anachronisms and authoritarianism;

—Personal political high-handedness;

—Lust for unlimited power.

Today we and everybody ask for this country to be rescued from the stranglehold of continual chaos, insecurity in life and work, the leeches of corruption, and the political sloth of the incompetent. We want to build an open and free society for everybody, to organize efficient public institutions, and to guarantee a judiciary in which defense of the law will coexist with respect for the rights of every citizen.

The PS has prepared itself as the main political force for an alternative government in Albania. Our motto is: The past cannot be changed, let us build a democratic future.

We carry equal responsibility for the past, and suffered equally in the past, like everybody else. But we are not speculative or hypocritical. We do not appeal to either nostalgia or hatred. Our culture is one of compromise. Our aim is Pan-Albanian integration in a democratic society. Our aspiration is Albania's renewal.

We have determinedly demanded and will achieve the release of PS Chairman Fatos Nano through the free ballot of the people. With the same determination, we guarantee that we will never use prison and handcuffs for our political opponents. We promise that everybody involved in politics will have the freedom to renew themselves and be integrated into political life. We guarantee freedom of movement, freedom of the press, and freedom of opinion and religion. The more diverse opinions are, the more equal people are in their rights.

We Socialists of today have shown a European spirit. The Albanians therefore trust us, and will ask for us and vote for us.

Grasping this imperative for the development of democracy and accepting the challenge of the times, we are ready to undertake with wisdom and courage all the political and civil responsibilities necessary to give the people and the country a more worthy future.

The PS guarantees a new policy of government, with democracy under the law and responsibility to the mandate of the people, with the aim that:

—The institution of head of state will be a guarantee of constitutional justice for everybody;

—The state budget will enrich citizens and not corrupt members of the government;

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—The parliamentary mandate will be used for the benefit of those who voted for it.

The essence of the policy of Socialist government is the faster and balanced development of market economy reforms, and the construction of the rule of law on the basis of political partnership and national conciliation.

We offer understanding and cooperation on the basis of partnership to every progressive Albanian political force. Albania does not need either the ghosts of the past nor the bogeymen of the present day.

We Socialists offer:

—Community instead of exclusivity;

—Solidarity instead of marginalization;

—Free enterprise instead of discrimination;

—Justice instead of hatred.

We are not seeking power for the purposes of making careers and enriching ourselves.

We are servants of the law and of the citizens.

We defend the principle that says: My freedom ends when it encroaches on the freedom of another.

Every vote for us adds to our responsibilities.

Every vote against us makes us think how we can improve ourselves.

To Europe—With Albania Europeanized!

This is the sole road for us to realize our fellow countrymen's age-old aspirations for European integration. The PS is realistically committed to achieving this objective. This goal is included in the alternative that we are proposing and offering to voters.

Freedom, dignity, equality of opportunities and rights for everybody, an impartial state, secularism and freedom of religion, security and a balance of interests, national solidarity between generations and between regions—these are the alternatives that the PS offers to Albanian men and women, so that they may preserve and cultivate the values of genuine democracy.

The PS responds to the disillusionment with the government of today and to aspirations for a democratic state. We appeal to the Albanians with our guarantee that they will participate in public debate and decisions involving their own lives and those of their children.

A Constitution in a European Spirit and a Basic Law for All Albanians

We guarantee the independence of the judiciary, impartial justice, and responsible courts.

Every Albanian citizen will have the right to individual application to the European Commission and the European Court for Human Rights.

We will respect and apply in every area of life the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the basic documents of the OSCE, and the conventions of the Council of Europe.

To Europe—With Security and Solidarity

For us Socialists, the security of the citizen lies in his inalienable rights. We are determined to guarantee them at all costs. We therefore propose to the electorate:

—Concrete programs for secure jobs;

—An Albania 2000 program for the infrastructure;

—An Urban Development 2000 program;

—A Rural Development 2000 program;

—A program against corruption and crime.

We ask you to vote for us, because we aim at, and will achieve with you, the goals of:

—No home without electricity;

—No home without water;

—No village without a telephone;

—No hospital without heating;

—No peasant without land;

—No child without school;

—No specialist without work;

—No businessman under threat;

—No pensioner uninsured.

We ask you to vote for us, because we aim at, and will achieve with you, safety from:

—Kidnappers of children;

—Ordinary thieves;

—Corrupt members of the government;

—Bribed judges;

—Bandit policemen;

—Speculating tradesmen.

To Europe—With Wisdom

The PS is convinced that its intellectual strength comes from the support for its political alternative among the largest and most progressive part of the Albanian intelligentsia.

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Our political and intellectual superiority stems from and is displayed in our continual and fruitful partnership and cooperation with the most progressive Pan-Albanian intelligentsia. The PS is the most powerful engine to make our national culture a major factor in the democratization and civilization of society.

To invest in culture and the intelligentsia is no sacrifice.

To neglect and underestimate them is to sacrifice the nations future.

Our investment in the future, in education, culture, science, art, sport, and health, aims to raise wiser, more European, and at the same time more patriotic generations.

To Europe—Without Corruption

We are not discouraged by our political and professional commitments to construct a market economy with justice and solidarity in Albania. The corrupt, and in general those denounced by the opposition in the last three to four years, will be brought to justice as soon as the presidential guards primitive patronage and court protection over the state inspectorate and the judiciary collapses.

The opposition has documented the thefts and fiddles of presidential clients during privatization, in the use of public funds, and in contracts with foreign capital. We are professionally aware of the historic and current market value of Albania's national assets. We have seen and accurately recorded the PD Government's official rigging of supply and demand during privatization. We know how inherited basic capital has been undervalued and destroyed by the distribution of real estate, building lots, bank funds, domestic credits, and international loans according to political criteria and favoritism.

Our electoral platform makes a clear distinction between the PD's nepotistic and corrupt tycoons and honest businessmen who have enjoyed and will continue to enjoy our support.

We therefore call on the electorate: Let us save democracy and Albania from thieves!

We will govern without revenge!

We will govern without smuggling!

We will govern without corruption!

To Europe—With European Policies

Our skill and readiness to enter into dialogue and cooperation with a broad political spectrum are reinforced by a political commitment to partnership and a defense of democratic principles and the values of modern civilization in international relations.

Our priority is integration with our partners with dignity and understanding. We do not conform to and will not reconcile ourselves to the demagogy of the presidential policy of concessions and exceptions with its flagrant violations of human rights and its failure to ratify basic European conventions.

The PS aims to secure Albania an international position with broad opportunities for action, in order to eliminate directionless policies and signs of political neglect and indifference. Our aim is to ensure continual and stable cooperation with member states of the Council of Europe and the EU, the United States, and other countries.

Our political geography is clear: for all euro-atlantic structures, a Europeanized Balkans, neighorliness and understanding with everybody, friendship and solidarity with left-wing social democratic forces, and reciprocal cooperation without political distinctions with European and world governments and financial organizations.

The PS powerfully supports progressive alternatives for the solution of the national question expressed by the Albanians in Kosova and the other Albanian-inhabited areas. The PS will defend their legitimate demands in accordance with international documents and the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination.

We who propose this alternative to you are Socialists. All Socialists are democrats, even though all democrats cannot be socialists. We are therefore determined to advance toward democracy in order to give everybody the opportunity to take part in building and owning democracy. Only the sovereign has the right to have the final and decisive say. Your votes are his word!

Vote for the PS!

Together with us—for genuine democracy!

Albania: Democratic Alliance's Ceka Addresses Socialists

AU2703143096 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 24 Mar 96 p 14

[Greeting by Democratic Alliance President Neritan Ceka to the Second Socialist Party Congress in Tirana on 23 March: "We Are Ready To Cooperate With Those Parties That Have Plans for an Albania of all Albanians"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Honored participants, delegates, and guests:

I am on this rostrum today on behalf of the Democratic Alliance [AD] with the express purpose of strengthening the good tradition of exchanging greetings on such

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major party occasions as congresses. However, I think that my presence here on the threshold of the elections is more than a sign of courtesy at a time when the state media are launching immoral propaganda in order to create gulfs of hostility and misunderstanding between political forces. The basic message that I bring you from the AD's members and supporters is: victory to the opposition.

In my speech to tens of thousands of students and citizens of Tirana at the Student City, I mentioned a widely held intellectual view when I said that no democratic society can be created in Albania without a serious and democratic left wing. I am convinced that this historic responsibility was understood by the Socialist Party [PS] long ago and that the Albanian left, like the other Albanian parties of the center and the right, is progressing along the rather lengthy road to Europeanization. As an Albanian, I wish this process to be as successful as possible, and I have spoken out against the insinuations of the state and its attempts to meddle with the internal life of parties. The AD considers democracy to be a regime of equal opportunities. This principle must also hold good for competition among the parties, which must be conducted on the basis of policies instead of abuse from the state. The government and the opposition are parts of the same system, whose democratic character is defined precisely by the degree of respect shown for the opposition. This is the reason why we, convinced that there was a lack of evidence, denounced as a political act the imprisonment of Fatos Nano. The passage of time has justified us, and we have been echoed by official views expressed in Europe and the United States. In the political spectrum, we are in opposition to the PS, but we did not rub our hands when Fatos Nano was removed from political platforms because we want alternatives to confront each other, represented by free people in front of free people. The greatest promise that the AD makes to the future opposition, if the people's votes give us a share in government, is that we will defend that opposition from vengeance and marginalization, which have unfortunately become part of Albanian political culture. We would like the PS to join us in this promise. The last four years in opposition, often under forms of pressure that are alien to democracy, have created a tradition of cooperation between the AD and the PS. We especially value our common efforts to build and create democratic institutions, such as our opposition to the populist constitution and the proposal of an alternative constitution, the defense of the independence of the courts, and the denunciation of the anticonstitutional commission for screening politicians. The AD considers these things to have been valuable experience, and remains open to all forms of cooperation, both before and after the elections, with all parties who have the courage to look the demands of the times straight in the eye and to provide an answer to the electorates big question of what Albania will be like on the threshold of the new century.

We are ready to cooperate with those parties that have plans for an Albania of all Albanians, from which nobody can be excluded or marginalized.

We favor an open and integrated society, on the foundation of a deeply European relationship between the citizen and the law, sanctioned by the constitution. The contents of this constitution and its approval by parliament will provide the basis for this project, which must include the separation of powers, a stronger executive, and the removal of any party character from the presidency and from permanent parts of the state. We are asking for a serious state with an uncorrupted and competent administration. We consider it an urgent necessity to establish freedom of information and to free the television from verbal abuse, to recognize the genuine autonomy of the university and the Academy of Sciences, to support the Albanian intellectual class, and to make investments in education and Albanian culture as investments in the countrys future.

We call for a return to the Electoral Law used for the 22 March 1992 elections in order to secure genuine pluralism in the Albanian parliament. In the economic field, we are open to cooperation that will ensure the faster establishment of a social market economy in Albania. We call for free enterprise to be released from state control and from party patronage, and for support for it from private banks. We are for faster privatization, but on the basis of a law that will guarantee a fair distribution of the assets created by millions of people and which will make the process effective with the help of long-term credit for production. We think that what we are distributing is still really a share of national poverty, and that real wealth remains to be created. Let us create the conditions for a rich Albania in which everybody will have unconditional opportunities for a life of dignity, an Albania unequivocally oriented on the European and Atlantic axis.

We are realistic about the situation today and appreciate the benefits brought by the change of system. We are not inviting you to create paradise, but are seeking the cooperation of those political forces that are for a different and better Albania, a normal Albania, an Albania in which the lights come on when you press the switch, water comes out when you turn the tap, and in which you leave home in the morning for work without becoming smeared with mud and being threatened by delinquents. This lies at the foundation of every agreement that I propose to your congress, and I

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am convinced that it has a single color, the white of sincerity and of dedication to the times. I wish you success at this congress, which is simultaneously an electoral convention.

Albania: Social Democratic Party Leader Greets Congress

AU2703205096 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 24 Mar 96 p 13

[Greetings message from Social Democratic Party chairman Skender Gjinushi to the Second Congress of the Albanian Socialist Party in Tirana on 23 March: "There Will Be No Red Fronts in Albania but Fronts Against Red Methods"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On behalf of the Social Democratic Party [PSD] of Albania, allow me to wish you success in the proceedings of your congress and in the coming elections.

We already find ourselves in an election campaign, although we still do not know the constituencies, the election date, or even the form of candidature, which we are waiting for a government commission of the president of the republic to determine.

Elections no doubt constitute one of the most important events in the political life of a country, especially one undergoing a sensitive and difficult transition.

Despite the leeway and the great opportunities created by the elections of 22 March 1992, such as the creation of a pluralist parliament and the transition to a market economy, our country is again confronted by a series of acute and serious problems that require solution.

The last four years have shown that democracy cannot be established overnight and that it is not the attribute or monopoly of a single party even when it is called the Democratic Party [PD]. It can especially not be the monopoly of a single person. To monopolize democracy means to distort it. It means monism, whose bitter taste the Albanians well know, and which has still unfortunately not departed.

As a result of this way of thinking and these methods, Albania is still without a constitution. Every article and paragraph of the Law on Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms, whose contents cannot be criticized, is being violated. The new Penal Code and the new Code of Penal Procedure are enforced and amended by the courts according to interests and political instructions. The official media disparage, slander, and humiliate the opposition as a whole under the government's direction. The main political forces have long set themselves to oppose such practices. The referendum of 6 November 1994, in which our parties played an especially large part, was highly significant. The people's votes showed that the majority are in favor of our alternative.

This vote showed above all that our people, the electorate, do not want monism of any kind. They do not want cults of individuals. They will not allow anybody to violate the basic principles of democracy, because there will be no turning back in Albania. This will also be the people's answer in the next elections.

In its inability to regain power by a free ballot and through debate and a battle of alternatives, the PD has chosen the most unacceptable path, the application of anticonstitutional laws and efforts to rig the elections. A democratic parliament cannot be elected on the basis of antidemocratic votes and laws.

The late and now lost ruling party is seeking to impose a bipolarity on Albanian society, to push the country very quickly into a crisis. In its panic, it is trying to strike at the parties of the center and even those of the right. However, a party is lost that multiplies its opponents, tries to artificially change the electorate, and sets itself against the left-of-center and right-wing parties; the future belongs to whoever is able to cooperate with these parties for the sake of genuine democracy and the country's future. Without support and genuine, broad cooperation based on the ballot box, you may cling to power, but you cannot govern the country.

The PSD is determined to oppose these policies and is ready to cooperate for this purpose with the main opposition forces. The PS has a primary role here and we hope that it will play it as it should.

In this enterprise, we have the support of the Socialist International, the Party of European Socialists, and all our sister parties. The PSD has welcomed your increased cooperation with these reputable parties and organizations, and welcomes the positive message sent to you by A. Ochetto on behalf of the Party of European Socialists. This represents an important step in the consolidation of the left in Albania and for strengthening and expanding the social-democratic alternative. The Albanian electorate is very well disposed to this alternative, and more than 80 percent support it. It is supported by the overwhelming majority of the peasantry, the unemployed, pensioners, the intelligentsia, those hit by Article 24/1 [excluding antidemocrats from work in public institutions], merchants exhausted by the corruption of those in power, former victims of persecution, and

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former proprietors who are disillusioned by the government. Some try to call this reality the creation of Red fronts. There will be no Red fronts in Albania, but fronts against Red methods and against extremes, whoever may exploit them. This is what the people expect from the next elections, and this is what they will doubtless achieve.

I once again wish success to your congress and your party.

Let us all stand together for genuine democracy and strong socialism.

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Bulgaria: Bokova Discusses Joining NATO, EU

AU2803162496 Prague PRAVO in Czech 26 Mar 96 p 6

[Interview with Bulgarian Deputy Foreign Minister Irina Bokova by Vera Ivanovicova in Prague; date not given: "We Want Prosperity and Greater Security Guarantees"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ivanovicova] What is Bulgaria's point of view on entry into the European Union (EU) and NATO?

[Bokova] The government has put forward clearly formulated policy objectives, and these are Bulgaria's integration into the European and Euroatlantic structures. This means very active cooperation with both the EU and NATO. We consider our activity regarding the EU to be a priority.

[Ivanovicova] What about NATO?

[Bokova] We are perhaps one of the most active member countries in the Partnership for Peace. We attach major significance to this because very lively debates on security issues are taking place in our society at the moment, and we are trying to adopt the most pragmatic approach possible to them. That is, we do not think that obtaining greater security for our country can be appraised only through a prism of for and against NATO membership.

[Ivanovicova] There are rumors about differences of opinion between the government and President Zhelyu Zhelev.

[Bokova] Yes. The president thinks that only full-fledged membership in NATO can resolve all of the aforementioned issues. We (the government of socialist Prime Minister Zhan Videnov—PRAVO note) are of the opinion that membership in one or other organization should not be the end per se, but the means of achieving certain aims. As far as membership in European organizations is concerned, we have two aims—greater prosperity for our people and greater guarantees for our national security. Therefore, we think that we have to continue looking for more reliable guarantees.

[Ivanovicova] Do the different opinions between the president and the government represent a dilemma for Bulgarian foreign policy?

[Bokova] I do not see anything dramatic in this. I think that it is normal from the point of view of the democratic process. Understandably, after a certain period for discussion and assessment, it would be far better if there were greater consensus in such an important issue, which is the case as far as the EU is concerned. Public opinion polls showed about a week ago that more than 80 percent of the respondents were in favor of EU membership, while, as far as NATO is concerned, the ratio was roughly 52 percent for and 48 percent against. Therefore, I believe that the politicians cannot make such important decisions without taking public opinion into consideration. The debate must continue.

[Ivanovicova] What is Bulgaria's approach to Russia's negative stance on NATO's enlargement toward the East?

[Bokova] We think, and we said this at the meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, that Russia has to be a participant in this dialogue, in finding a new model for security in Europe. I agree with the view that it is necessary to seek a strategic partnership with Russia. A feeling of uncertainty, of threat, should not be created in it. This is equally dangerous for everyone.

[Ivanovicova] What does Bulgaria think about the compromise apropos membership in NATO's political, but not military structures?

[Bokova] It is essential to look for various options, very flexibly and very openly, so that there is mutual understanding. Each hardening of attitudes, a dearth of options and flexibility, is by no means a way out of the situation in which Europe now finds itself.

Bulgaria: Politicians Said Afraid To Speak About NATO

AU2903115396 Sofia KONTINENT in Bulgarian 26 Mar 96 p 6

[Commentary by Tsvetana Krusteva: "Bad From All Directions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bulgaria's political circles cannot stop discussing the NATO topic; however, it was Genadiy Seleznev, Russian Duma chairman, who told us what the Bulgarian position is, namely, that there is no position. Indeed, obviously, there will be no position soon, and the Bulgarian politicians should watch what they are saying on this matter or better still, say nothing at all.

Even at its most difficult moments, Russia does not forget that it is a former empire and likes to demonstrate that it does not care what others decide because it has its own position.

One can be sure that Russia will be indifferent toward the statements of the Bulgarian president on our membership in NATO, and how he assesses the advantages and disadvantages of being or not being a NATO member.

It seems strange that noted anti-NATO figures of the ruling party repeatedly stressed in Moscow the positive

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aspects of the Russian position on NATO, but in Sofia they refuse to officially express their position in front of the journalists. Does it mean that Mr. Sendov [National Assembly chairman] and Foreign Minister Pirinski prefer to keep silent, and that they are afraid of uncomfortable questions?

Bulgaria: Pirinski Departs for EU Turin Conference

AU2903113096 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1000 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On 29 March, Foreign Minister Georgi Pirinski departed for Turin, where he will represent Bulgaria at the opening of the EU intergovernmental conference.

Mr. Pirinski said that the fact that the associated countries have been invited to attend the opening ceremony indicates that those countries really are viewed as states that are in the process of joining the EU.

Bulgaria will follow with interest the elaborations of the EU program, which will be made in the first days of the conference, and especially the clauses dealing with expanding the EU, Mr. Pirinski said.

Bulgaria: Assembly Ratifies Mesta River Accord With Greece

AU2803162996 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1600 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On 28 March, the National Assembly ratified on second reading the Bulgarian-Greek agreements on the use of the water of the Mesta River and on opening three new border checkpoints and road connections between the two countries.

The final adoption of the Bill on Municipal Taxes was postponed to 29 March.

The National Assembly adopted on second reading amendments to the Municipal Elections Bill.

The parliamentary faction of the Union of Democratic Forces disseminated a declaration on the ratification of the Bulgarian-Greek intergovernmental agreement on the use of the Mesta River water. The declaration points out that the opposition is not against the agreement. However, some of the agreement's clauses violate our national interests.

Bulgaria: SDS: Mesta Agreement Violates National Interests

AU2903122096 Sofia DEMOKRATSIYA in Bulgarian 29 Mar 96 p 2

["Declaration of SDS Parliamentary Faction: Majority Ignored National Interests"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a crude violation of the regulations and only with the votes of the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP], the Bulgarian parliament ratified the agreement between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Greece on using the water of the Mesta River.

The agreement does not correspond to the national interests of the Republic of Bulgaria and essentially is an act of national treason.

It is based on unreal and deliberately increased figures on the Mesta River flow, calculated for the period of 1935-70. The real average quantity of water in the river in the last 20 years is the half of the figures on which the agreement is based. This means that in years with normal rainfall we will give Greece half of the Mesta River water, and in arid years—almost the entire quantity of water.

The agreement's clauses fully favor the Greek side, while Bulgaria is not protected in the event it will not be able to guarantee the entire quantity of water required—almost 450,000,000 cubic meters per year.

The agreement was signed for a period of 35 years. Bulgaria is poor in water resources, and almost half of its population is subjected to restrictions in the use of water. This includes the population of Pirin Macedonia.

The agreement was adopted with the votes of BSP members of the National Assembly who did not attend the session, and are not even in the country. National Assembly Chairman Mr. Sendov did not accept the demand for a repeated vote, issued by all opposition parliamentary groups.

The adoption and ratification of the agreement shows again that the BSP poses its party interests above our national interests.

The Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] adheres to developing good-neighborly relations with Greece in all areas. The SDS government proved this during its rule in 1991-92 by signing bilateral agreements and accords. We are not against the agreement on the water from the Mesta River. We only claim that such an agreement should have equally noted the interests of Bulgaria and Greece, and should be based on figures showing the real quantity of water in the river.

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Bulgaria: Balkan Experts Discuss Foreign Ministers' Meeting

AU2803164496 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1600 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On 28 March, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a meeting of experts from the ministries of foreign affairs of the Balkan states took place. The participants exchanged opinions on organizing the Balkan meeting of foreign ministers Bulgaria is proposing. Today, our country proposed several basic topics which should be discussed at the foreign ministers' meeting.

It was agreed to hold a preparatory conference on the Balkan foreign ministers' meeting at the beginning of May, this time at the level of department heads.

Bulgaria: Public Discussion on Belene Nuclear Plant

AU2903124196 Sofia DEMOKRATSIYA in Bulgarian 29 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Article by Georgi Landzhov: "Public Discussion Rejects 'Belene' Nuclear Threat"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bulgaria has a real possibility of avoiding nuclear production if it replaces it by alternative energy sources. This was one of the basic conclusions of the public discussion entitled "Energy Development and the 'Belene' Nuclear Power Plant—Alternative Energy Strategies," which was held in Sofia on 28 March. The discussion was organized by the following nongovernmental ecological organizations: "For Earth," the Ecoglasnost People's Movement, "Green Mountains," the Student Environmental Protection Club, and the Association on Protecting Predatory Birds. The discussion achieved its goal, namely, focusing attention on the energy strategy of the ruling party. Resuming the construction of the "Belene" Nuclear Power Plant is a crucial part of this strategy. Ecologists, scientists, governmental employees, deputies, journalists, and public figures took part in the discussion. The different opinions that were expressed naturally increased tension in the hall.

Logically, the opponents to the construction of new nuclear reactors, had an advantage in the discussion. The exceptionally weak arguments in support of a new nuclear power plant, presented by the governmental officials, were demolished by the facts and studies of experts and scientists from the Bulgarian Academy of Science and Sofia's Kliment Okhridski University. Rumen Ganchev's statement that "Belene" cannot be connected to the country's grid but only to a much more powerful system, which will export power to the former Soviet republics, placed Nikita Nabatov, executive director of the National Electricity Company, in an awkward position. Indeed, acting like one of the characters in Ivan Vazov's novels, he ran away from the discussion hall. This gave Professor Georgi Desimirov the opportunity to stress that our power supply system is managed by amateurs. Nabatov himself is a chemist, who knows nothing about nuclear energy.

The discussion pointed out the total economic and financial inefficiency of a new nuclear power plant. The international institutions that finance such projects, refused to finance Belene, while loans from foreign banks will carry an interest rate of 18 percent.

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Slovakia: Russia Again Postpones Minister Sitek's Visit

AU2803181496 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 27 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by "pv": "Four Percent of Slovak Defense Ministry Budget for Partnership for Peace"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—The doubling of Slovakia's annual financial contribution to the Partnership for Peace [PFP] program was announced by Colonel Ludovit Gal, director of the Foreign Relations Section at the Slovak Ministry of Defense, yesterday. In 1994 we contributed 1 percent from the Defense Ministry's budget to the PFP account, as we had contractually pledged when joining the program. Last year the defense department appropriated 2 percent from its budget for PFP activities. From this year's budget of 13.6 billion Slovak korunas, it will appropriate 2 percent more than last year. Colonel Gal conceded that last year's international military exercise on the territory of the Slovak Republic did not take place within the framework of the official PFP program. He observed, however, that it took place in its spirit. This year our Army will organize the Cooperative Dragon [previous two words published in English] exercise, which will take place as a regular part of the PFP program. In addition, our soldiers will participate by the end of the year in another 11 command staff and military exercises in Europe and the United States. Colonel Gal confirmed, furthermore, that Slovak Defense Minister Sitek's visit to Russia, scheduled for this Thursday and Friday [28-29 March], has been postponed again, on the basis of a communication [vyjadrenie] from the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation.

Slovakia: Schenk To Attend Intergovernmental Conference

AU2803183896 Bratislava TASR in English 1811 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bratislava, March 28, (SLOVAKIA)—Slovak Foreign Minister Juraj Schenk will take part in the ceremonial opening of the European Union Intergovernmental Conference in Torino on March 29-30, 1996. The Conference will be the focus on reforming the Agreement of European Union and will last until the first half of 1997.

The Slovak Foreign Ministry's spokesperson announced that Schenk, along with other foreign ministers from countries associated with the EU, will attend a conference at Torino University entitled the Contemporary European Cultural Unity and deliver a speech.

On Saturday, Italian Foreign Affairs Minister Susanna Agnelli, will meet EU associate-member countries Foreign Affairs ministers.

Slovakia expects the Intergovernmental Conference to create preconditions for EU expansion.

Slovakia: Coalition Now Unified on Treaty Ratification

96CH0066E Bratislava SLOVAK SPECTATOR in English 13 Feb 96 pp 1, 3

[Article by Hannah Wolfson: "Meciar Promises the Treaty Will Pass"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] After more than six months of debate, Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar's governing coalition may finally have reached a consensus on one of the touchiest subjects in his country today: the treaty between Slovakia and Hungary.

The accord, an attempt to solidify relations between the two neighbors, was signed by Meciar and his Hungarian counterpart, Gyula Horn, last March and ratified by the Hungarian Parliament in June. Since then it has languished in the halls of the Slovak Parliament.

For the Slovaks the major obstacle lay in Article 15 of the treaty, which deals broadly with the autonomy of ethnic minorities. The document's drafters agreed to base any language dealing with the provision—which spelled out special rights for the estimated 600,000 ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia and the smaller Slovak minority in Hungary—on international standards.

But the two sides disagreed over just what those international standards should be. In the end, the treaty was modelled after a recommendation of the European Parliament (EP) that may be interpreted as granting minorities the right to develop autonomous structures drawn on ethnic lines.

The Hungarians refused to sign the treaty without such language; the Slovaks refused to include it. Finally a compromise was reached, and the Slovak side agreed to put pen to paper on the condition that an appendix setting limits to the clause would be added.

Ten months later Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Dusan Slobodnik and his vice-chair, Jozef Prokes, set off for Strasbourg to consult with the Council of Europe and draft this appendix or "interpretation clause."

The interpretation clause will give the Slovak Parliament the final word on how the treaty is interpreted, Slobodnik explained before departing for Strasbourg.

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"It will be official only for the Slovak side," he said. "Of course it is not obligatory for the Hungarians, but we have to make sure any government here recognizes only those measures which conform to internationally valid treaties."

Once the interpretation clause is in place, Meciar will have silenced the pact's noisiest opponents in Parliament: the Slovak National Party (SNS).

The SNS, junior members in the ruling coalition, have repeated often that they would not support the treaty since it first appeared on parliament's schedule last fall.

One reason was because they insisted on an interpretation clause. "The SNS has asked the government to start discussions with the Hungarian parliament to sign an interpretation protocol, to find an unique interpretation for the articles in question, and after that we could be prepared to ratify the treaty," Prokes, vice-chairman of the SNS, said back in November.

But it turns out that was not all the SNS wanted. On January 13, party leaders announced they would only come on board if the coalition promised to back four bills this year: the Law on the Protection of the Republic; a law allowing the institution of martial law; a law on local elections; and an "alternative education" bill.

But Slobodnik said all those conditions had been agreed upon by the HZDS before the coalition was even formed. "Everything that was argued is in the government's platform that was adopted in 1994," the HZDS deputy said. "This means it has nothing to do with the Hungarian-Slovak treaty."

Slovak National Party Chairman Jan Slota attributed his party's about-face to a desire to maintain coalition unity.

"We reviewed our attitude and approach to this problem just for the sake of preserving the coalition," Slota said from the seat of his second occupation as the mayor of Zilina. "In my personal opinion, if this had not happened (SNS's support of the treaty), it would have been the beginning of the end of the coalition."

Regardless of the reason, the SNS's switch from treaty opponent to supporter gave Meciar the opening to announce that "the coalition problem has been resolved."

Oddly, though, two days before the SNS made its legislative demands public, the Slovak press agency TASR reported that Meciar had already promised OSCE High Commissioner Max van der Stoel that the Slovak Parliament would pass the treaty with the support of coalition deputies.

The next question, as it has been for months, is when. Meciar and his deputies now say that it will come to a vote by March, a deadline that diplomatic sources and others involved in foreign policy have come up with several possible reasons for. First of all, it will be the one-year anniversary of the signing of the treaty, time enough for ratification to come to pass.

"The pressure may be because of this anniversary," said Milan Wlachovsky, a researcher for the Slovak Foreign Policy Association.

Added pressure may come from the upcoming Intergovernmental Conference of the European Union, scheduled for April. While the conference will focus principally on internal EU issues, it can only help Slovakia if it has its prerequisites for application (including good relations with its neighbors) complete before the meeting.

Either way, the treaty is on its way to completion. "This treaty will be ratified," Slobodnik said. "I am sure of this."

Slovakia: State Jobs Said To Depend on Loyalty to Meciar

AU2803134596 Bratislava SME in Slovak 26 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by "r": "Support for Vladimir Meciar's Government Decisive Factor in Concluding Employment Contracts"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—A campaign in support of Vladimir Meciar's government is currently under way among employees of local state administration offices in Trencin district. The text of the statement they are signing reads: "We, the undersigned employees of local state administration offices in Trencin district, declare: We fully support the policy of the present government and Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar and condemn the irresponsible and untrue statements by some politicians at home and abroad that tarnish Slovakia's image and are the cause of unjustified interference by foreign states in the internal affairs of the Slovak Republic." This document is being submitted to state administration employees in Trencin for signing, with the verbal addendum that their signature will be the decisive factor in deciding on the conclusion of employment contracts during the restructuring of state administration.

Slovakia: National Bank Stabilizes Economic Development

96CH0066B Bratislava SLOVAK SPECTATOR in English 13 Feb 96 pp 1, 10

[Article by Hannah Wolfson: "NBS Echoes Economic Stability"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] International economists have long praised the National Bank of Slovakia (NBS) for

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steering the country's banking system safely through the shoals of politics. So when the NBS dropped its discount rate from 9.75 to 8.8 percent last month, it was no surprise to banking analysts who said it was just one more signal that the Slovak economy is on a stable course.

"It is only an indicator which is lagging behind reality," said Peter Feith, an analyst at Ernst & Young. "It is a reaction to the facts. It is already done."

NBS Spokesman Jan Onda agreed, saying that the move was the inevitable result of falling inflation rates, which dropped 1.6 percent between October and December of 1995.

"If the NBS wanted to react to these changes," Onda said, "It was impossible not to change the discount rate (the interest rate affixed by the NBS on loans to commercial banks)." "And if we speak about this discount rate as an economic indicator," he added, "it is an economic rate that symbolizes stability."

The discount rate, which stood at 12 percent for the first 16 months of the Slovak Republic's existence, has slipped downwards almost 3.5 percent since last March.

Actually, as the inflation rate plummeted from a 1993 base of 25 percent to 11.7 percent at the beginning of 1994, commercial bankers and the government pushed the NBS to lower the discount rate. But the NBS held firm, Onda explained, to guarantee that real interest rates—the actual rate money earns even after being devalued by inflation—would rise.

They did, soaring from negative 12 percent to 5 percent. Once inflation stabilized, the national bank got moving, cutting the discount rate from 12 percent to 11 percent in the spring of 1994, and again to 9.75 last October.

When the discount rate falls, interest rates at commercial banks drop, too. Because it becomes cheaper for the larger commercial banks to borrow money, it is easier for them to hand it out, which in turn boosts investment and encourages development. This time, however, banks are not likely to take dramatic immediate action.

As an example, Creditanstalt Bratislava, which posts a prime rate of 15 percent, is in no hurry to drop anything but their one-month fixed rate loans, explained its director, Regina Ovesny-Straka.

"Of course, the National Bank wants (commercial banks to lower their rates) because they want to send a positive signal for investments," Ovesny-Straka said. "But the interest rates went down three to five percent last year and that's enough, I think."

Nonetheless, low-interest loans on personal savings are likely to drop eventually if only because Slovakia's banking market is small and competitive. Thus when Vseobecna Uverova Banka (VUB), one of the largest Slovak banks, lowers its rates by about one percent in February, smaller banks will feel the need to keep up.

"We are not the market leaders here," said Ovesny-Straka, "So we have to react when other banks do that."

In theory, with money cheaper to come by the savings less profitable, investments should increase. However, even with a one-percent rate cut, loans in Slovakia are still well above the Western standard, and the long-term, low-interest loans that boost development and other less speculative types of investment are still hard to find.

"If they want to improve banking they have to improve all the laws to do with banking," Feith said, singling out mortgage and bankruptcy laws as crucial elements of overall banking reform.

A number of signs do suggest that Slovakia is pushing to revamp the country's whole credit system this year. A new amendment to the Banking Act that will grant the NBS more supervision over commercial banks will come up in Parliament this month.

Moreover, another law dictating conditions for long-term, low-interest mortgage loans is also expected to emerge in the next few months, or could be included in an amendment to the Banking Act. And the National bank itself is urging the government to give tax breaks to commercial banks as an incentive for restructuring bad debts.

Still, the work is proceeding slowly, Ovesny-Straka explained. "The National Bank is trying to come up with new ideas and that's a positive sign," she said. "But they can't manage everything in one year. Even the Czechs haven't solved the same problems yet, and they have had a national bank from the beginning."

Slovakia: Privatization of Biotika Still Unresolved

96CH0066C Bratislava SLOVAK SPECTATOR in English 13 Feb 96 pp 1, 12

[Article by Daniel Borsky: "Political Gold-Diggers Eye Biotika"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For one year now the National Property Fund (FNM) has been unable to decide the privatization fate of Biotika, one of Slovakia's most prosperous companies. A 40.6 percent chunk of Biotika's shares owned by the state and administered by the FNM has been left suspended in the air, leading to a halving of the company's price per share and increasing nervousness among its management and employees.

Though management and employees did team up to purchase the shares after the FNM decided not to

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award a public tender last July, they have yet to hear from the Fund. Employees' representatives claimed that one reason for the FNM's no-response is that interest groups affinitive to the ruling Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) are snooping around Biotika's fat privatization bone, singling out HZDS deputy Karol Konarik and Minister of Transportation Alexander Rezes.

Both officials denied the allegations. Like players in a multimillion dollar card game, the main brokers in Biotika's saga gather around the privatization table, their poker faces on, waiting to see who will blink first.

Located fifteen kilometers east of Banska Bystrica in the central Slovak town of Slovenska Lupca, Biotika has enjoyed a 40-year monopoly in antibiotic production. It produced 1.25 billion Sk worth of goods in 1994, and its turnover in that time was 1.48 billion Sk, showing growth in both areas compared to 1993 by 4 and 8 percent, respectively. Biotika supplies the entire Slovak market, but that is just 15 percent of its production; the other 85 percent is exported.

It's no wonder then that the company is called a family jewel of the Slovak economy. But it is also a family business in a way. An entire family working here for generations is not a rarity. "I've been working here for 34 years," said Lubomir Sebes, chairman of Biotika's labor union parliament, a unique-for-Slovakia model of a labor organization. "My wife and son work here too."

Biotika employees seem to love their company. A huge majority of them supported the creation of Biotika-Zamestnanci (Biotika employees), a joint stock company within Biotika that has applied for the FNM's 40.6 percent stake of it. Biotika-Zamestnanci's ownership is divided between employees and management at a ratio of 65:35.

This majority also urged the FNM in an official letter on January 3 to wrap things up. "More than 85 percent of Biotika's 2000 employees confirmed with their signatures that they stand behind us," said Viliam Vanco, Biotika-Zamestnanci's elected chairman.

What Biotika needs most is a decision, because employees are frustrated and increasingly insecure about their future, and management is tired of explaining to their business partners why two-fifths of company's shares are still hanging in the balance.

"Delaying the decision over privatization harms our company economically and morally," said Juraj Sismis, Biotika's general manager. "It's harder and harder to settle contracts with our business partners, since we are not able to tell them what our future will look like."

A year ago, when the FNM announced a public tender for the company, one Biotika'share was worth as much as 1500'sk. That price has plummeted to a present day value of around 820'sk. "We need to see a solution soon, whatever it may be," said Vladimir Schneider, the chief of Biotika's labor union. "It is always better to work under any owner than under none."

In the first wave of voucher privatization in 1992, 59.4 percent of the company was sold. VUB Kupon and Cassovia investment funds became the major owners, controlling 15 percent and 11 percent, respectively.

Another 17 percent block of shares are held by retail investors and Biotika employees who invested their coupons massively into their own company and, according to both Sismis and Schneider, now control about 2.5-3 percent of that block. If Biotika-Zamestnanci acquired the additional 40.6 percent now administered by the FNM, they would be safely in the driver's seat.

The Fund controls 313,300'shares and 101,600 convertible bonds, issued in 1994. This summer it will be possible to convert the bonds into shares. If they are converted, bonds and shares would represent as much as 47 percent of the company ownership. That seems a bone worth snooping for.

Three companies competed in a public tender announced by the FNM in February 1995. One of them was Biogena, a joint venture of Biotika and S&D Chemicals, Ltd of Cunningham House, London.

Biogena offered 425 million Sk total, with 315 million Sk up front and in cash; comparatively, Biogena's competitors—Crewin, created by the Harvard Investment Fund, and RZ Biofarma—offered down payments of 90 and 57 million Sk, respectively.

But Jaroslav Bilik, the executive director of the FNM's section of public tenders, said the two other companies offered higher total sums—by 177 million and 146 million Sk respectively—than that produced by Biogena. Six months after opening the public tender, the FNM announced that no one had won it.

"What was considered as a tie-breaker was each company's prospectus," Bilik said. "But none of the three was convincing enough to decide a winner. The board of directors wasn't sure that any of them would be able to fulfill their prospecta."

Schneider disagreed. The labor union chief said it was the presence of foreign capital in both Biogena and BZ Biofarma that was the real reason why the FNM decided against selling off the property.

"When Mr. Vanco and I want to see (ZRS Chairman) Mr. (Jan) Luptak, he boasted that it was the ZRS

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who thwarted the plans for foreign capital in Biotika," Schneider said.

He also accused FNM representatives of deliberately discouraging Slovak entrepreneurs from turning to foreign capital and recommending they approach Slovak banks instead.

When asked about this, Bilik said, "I wouldn't put it this way. Where did you get this information from? I will not comment on this."

The FNM then decided to conduct a direct sale of Biotika's shares. In response, Biotika's management and employees formed Biotika-Zamestnanci in August 1995. Biotika's employees believed that they would have a chance to privatize under this scenario, since Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar's HZDS introduced a privatization program during the 1994 election campaign consisting of three equal parts—the coupon method, public tenders and employees joint-stock companies.

Biotika-Zamestnanci offered 380 million Sk for shares valued then at about 325 million Sk. The offer included a 100 million Sk down payment, a promise to pay off the remainder in eight years, plus future investments of 1 billion Sk.

The company's 10,000 shares were divided into 4,999 for management and 5,001 for employees. "In September we came to see Mr. Luptak and Mr. (Stefan) Gavornik, the FNM chairman, to promote our proposal," Schneider explained.

"When we introduced it, Mr. Luptak first called us liars, because, in his words,'no one in this state will give that much to workers.' Mr. Gavornik said that under this ratio it would not be privatization but socialism. Then he proposed that the ratio be changed to 65:35 in favor of employees and if we do that, we could get the stake right away."

By December, the ratio was changed to 65:35 in favor of employees to meet Gavornik's criteria. But the FNM has not yielded a decision. Surprisingly, Bilik, one of the eleven FNM executive directors charged with making recommendations on all the Funds' privatization decisions, said he was unaware of Biotika-Zamestnanci's proposal.

"I don't remember that I've seen any project of the employees' joint stock company," he said. Told that the offer has been on the FNM's table since September, Bilik added, "Only from what I've seen in the press."

Another source at the Fund told THE SLOVAK SPECTATOR that a decision is imminent. "There's no need to write an article about Biotika," the source said, "because it will be decided in two weeks anyway."

But Biotika-Zamestnanci chairman VanZo said they have been hearing that story since September. Now it seems as if the company's employees just want the whole matter decided, even if their offer isn't the one that is accepted. "If the rest of shares is privatized by someone who has proposed better conditions for FNM and consequently Slovakia we are ready to meet the new owner and negotiate," Vanco said.

But Schneider said Biotika's employees would not accept a solution that undercuts their own offer, warning that if that happened, "We will use every possible legal way to put our will through, even if it means packing 10-15 buses with our employees and hitting the government's seat in Bratislava."

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Hungary: Kovacs Confident of Early Accession to NATO

LD2903112496 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 0600 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs, the expert opinion of foreigners to the effect that Hungary could be left out of the first round of the NATO expansion is not a cause for worry. Laszlo Kovacs spoke to Attila Kert.

[Begin recording] [Kovacs] All the NATO foreign and defense ministers I have met in recent months, as well as the NATO leaders, including the NATO secretary general, have said that Hungary will be included in the first group of the new member countries.

Regarding the recent argument that Hungary would not be geographically connected with NATO if Slovakia could not join—first of all, Slovakia's accession to NATO is still being discussed; it is not impossible that Slovakia will also be in the first round. Second, I was told at the U.S. Defense Department in the Pentagon recently, that Hungary's accession to NATO is primarily a political issue, and from this viewpoint geographical connection is not necessarily a requirement. [passage omitted]

[Kert] Is it not possible that the Slovak situation provides a good excuse for the U.S. to compromise with Russia and give in to the Russians in the dispute, at Hungary's expense?

[Kovacs] In the region, it is Hungary's accession to NATO that would bother Russia the least. Russian leaders have expressed this several times. I do not believe that leaving Hungary out would be a compromise. [end recording]

Hungary: Keleti Urges U.S. To Clarify Study on NATO

LD2903144096 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1100 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hungarian Defence Minister Gyergy Keleti has reacted to a U.S. study, according to which the chances of Hungary's entry into NATO have fallen. Our correspondent reports on Gyorgy Keleti's media briefing in the Defense Ministry.

[Unidentified correspondent] At the briefing—which is still under way—Gyorgy Keleti said he is going to write to the Pentagon, for it is the Pentagon which commissioned the Rand Corporation Research Institute to make the study. According to the study, Poland and the Czech Republic are almost in NATO, while Hungary has dropped back on the list of applicants.

Keleti wants to know whether the study, which was made public, also reflects the official stance of the U.S. Administration.

By the way, it is said in Brussels that NATO has no admission schedule.

Hungary: Horn Interviewed on Domestic Situation, NATO

WS2803113996 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 25 Mar 96 p 8

[Interview with Gyula Horn, prime minister of the Hungarian Republic, by Ryszard Bilski; place and date not given: "The Hungarians Appreciate Stability"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Bilski] The governing Hungarian Socialist Party is to hold a congress this spring. There is talk of significant cadre and platform changes. A large number of the party's members are said to want to take a sharp "turn to the left." What do you—as the prime minister and leader of the party—expect from the congress?

[Horn] The upcoming congress of the party will primarily assess the work which the party's leadership did over the last two years; it will also specify tasks for the future and elect new authorities. Moreover, we want to modify the statute, create better mechanisms of cooperation with the people, by taking advantage of the experience the party has acquired as the ruling party. You will hear a more detailed answer at the congress.

[Bilski] Implementation of the austere anticrisis plan, known as the "plan of Bokros," the former finance minister, has disturbed the Hungarian people. The opposition claims that it is not necessary to further tighten the belt. Independent experts also criticize the government, saying that it is not trying to negotiate deferment of the foreign debt repayment, which would allow the people as well as the economy to catch a second breath; in such a case more money could be earmarked for education, for the ailing health service, and for help for families living in poverty.

[Horn] When we took over power in 1994, Hungary's (gross) foreign debt was $33 billion, the deficit in the balance of payments reached 9.5 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. The anticrisis rescue program was announced, as we put it, "in the last hour," which means that it happened at the very last moment. It was impossible to delay the decision any longer because this might have ended in a tragedy for both the economy and the people. Creditors and international financial institutions reacted favorably to this program. Now, let me quote a few examples. At the end of 1995, the capital invested by foreign companies in Hungary reached $10

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billion; if we add last year's revenues from privatization, this sum rises to $13 billion. Capital inflow covered the deficit in the balance of payments by nearly 90 percent.

Over the past two years, the debt structure also changed for the better; the share of costly short-term loans decreased very significantly.

What Hungary needs today is primarily stability and trust from foreign partners. Without this foreign capital might pull out, which would unfavorably affect our production and export capabilities; in addition, unemployment and prices would rise, and we would be unable to control the increasing inflation. Processes of integration with the European structures would be halted. Therefore, the most important task of the government is to ease social tension. I am afraid that it would be too risky to experiment with increasing individual and collective consumption, as many independent experts and part of the opposition suggest. I am afraid that we might pour down the drain quite significant achievements of the process of stabilizing the Hungarian economy. For the first time, the possibility of restructuring the obsolete and overly "inflated" structures of the economy and of the state has become realistic. We must not let it slip through our fingers. Of course, as more and more possibilities arise, we are trying to limit the most drastic measures, "loosen the belt," and pay special attention to senior citizens and families with many children.

[Bilski] The aforementioned independent experts say that by selling foreign companies, almost the entire economy, along with the power sector, the government will make Hungary completely dependent on foreign capital. There are allegations that the West is buying and then closing down Hungarian factories to gain new markets for their own products. There is not much interest in production. Do you share these fears?

[Horn] There are many reasons why foreign investors are investing in Hungary. They are undoubtedly attracted by the skilled and relatively cheap work force; other factors include a stable political situation, tax breaks, and a very good geographical location. For these reasons, we are one of the most attractive partners in the region.

Right now we have 22,000 mixed companies, and foreign capital is the "second owner" of the Hungarian economy.

Privatization? We have not gone for the coupon method; we decided to sell our companies to strategic investors. A strategic investor must have capital to buy new technologies; such an investor also takes on responsibility for the future of the company. These are not empty words. Two-fifths of our exports come from companies with foreign capital. An added advantage is that these companies develop contacts with the world market far more quickly than others.

[Bilski] A few months ago, the Hungarian president signed the law on the media, which put an end to the "war" over television and radio that had been going on for many years. However, the situation is still unclear as far as the press is concerned. For example, opposition dailies are going bankrupt, and one of the reasons for this is an ad policy which favors publications close to the governing coalition. One of the American institutes, which in the past years gave a very high grade 5 to "freedom of the press in Hungary," has now lowered its grade to a mere 3. Are you not disturbed by that?

[Horn] If you had asked me about these issues before 1994, when I chaired an opposition party, I would have bitterly complained that the coalition which was in power at that time was pursuing an ad policy which favored publications which were close to it and whose circulation was very small. Now, my cabinet is pursuing a different policy. The only thing that determines the situation of the free press is the market. You most probably know that companies, institutions, as well as citizens put ads more readily in popular, high-circulation publications.

[Bilski] As is known, there are three priorities in Hungarian foreign policy: integration with the European structures and NATO, good relations with neighbors, and solicitude for the Hungarians who live outside the country. Increasingly loud rumors could be heard recently that the third priority is jeopardized. As rumor has it, the Hungarian Government is going to act more moderately in national minority issues in oder not to give additional problems to its neighbors and to the integration of Europe. As a result, Hungarians living in Romania, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Slovakia, and in many other countries began to feel alienated and vulnerable. Are you an advocate of this change in policy toward Hungarian minorities?

[Horn] I do not support a policy which might turn against minorities, no matter whether they are Hungarian minorities in other countries or other minorities in Hungary. Any change in our priorities in foreign policy is out of the question, especially that the goal of these priorities is the same and they support each other. Whenever our countrymen living abroad are harmed, we take calm diplomatic action, without "making a fuss." This is because we have already learned that clamorous propaganda and mutual "recriminations over the border" do not improve the situation of the minorities. It is absolutely certain that if relations between two neighbors

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become tense, the first consequence of this is deterioration of the situation of the minorities.

[Bilski] Establishment of the American military base in Hungary for units which are carrying out "frontline tasks" in former Yugoslavia meant more than, for example, joint Hungarian-American exercises. Many Hungarian politicians believe that this will help Hungary join NATO more quickly. At the same time, one can hear opinions that the United States will not do anything that Russia "does not like." Which of these two opinions is closer to what you think?

[Horn] The military forces are not carrying out "frontline tasks"; I would say that they are keeping a peace which was made after lengthy and tough negotiations. Several countries have taken on the duty of providing assistance in the implementation of this task. It is a good thing that our engineering units are helping out in the reconstruction of bridges. I hope that soon instead of military units we will be sending civilian construction firms to Yugoslavia. Today, however, logistics bases are still necessary, also in Hungary. I will not deny that this fact is a signal that we are drawing closer to NATO, but the date when Hungary will join the alliance is still impossible to specify. I want to stress that our country is and will be the only one to decide that we aspire to join NATO, because we are a sovereign state. Now, as far as the stands taken by the great superpowers are concerned, you probably realize that they do not only watch their own interests, but also take into account the sensitivity of others. On this, we have no influence.

[Bilski] The political forces which led to the democratic transformations in Central and Eastern Europe were beaten in elections. This happened in the case of the Polish Solidarity, the Hungarian Democratic Forum, and parties in other countries (Romania, Bulgaria). How would you comment on this?

[Horn] Probably as a result of some misunderstanding or even not understanding, people tend to believe that only the old opposition which came to power in the first period of the transformations is to be reckoned with. It is still believed to be the right force, the one which is able and empowered to carry out democratic reforms. However, in each of the aforementioned countries reform forces within the "state parties" made a considerable—although, of course, varying—contribution to the democratic transformations. In Hungary and the Baltic states, the return of those forces, which were also among the initiators of the democratic transformations, is particularly noticeable. After swinging too rapidly at first, now the pendulum is returning—not toward dictatorship, but toward democracy. The society appreciates peace and stability. Thus, it is no wonder that instead of catchy slogans and "noisy" politicians, it elects people whom they trust.

[Bilski] Postcommunist countries, particularly Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, are often likened to "lovers that have been seduced and then abandoned by the West." However, do you not think that instead of worrying about this and criticizing the West for being excessively reserved in relations with the former family of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, we should ourselves try to overcome our difficulties? Meanwhile, the free trade zone is ailing, the Visegrad agreement is being "left aside." What is your opinion on the attempts to form a defense alliance within the Visegrad agreement?

[Horn] I could not agree more that we must resolve our problems ourselves. However, I also try to seize every opportunity to draw the attention of our foreign partners to the fact that there are limits to what the Hungarians as well as the citizens of the other Central and East European countries can take on. I try to persuade them that if they help us overcome our problems more quickly, this will be beneficial to everyone; one reason for this is the fact that economic stability will strengthen political stability.

Defense alliances within the Visegrad agreement? I believe that two or three bilateral defense treaties are of marginal importance. In this day and age, only membership in one large military defense organization offers security guarantees.

As for lost opportunities, we can talk about them in the economic sphere. I hope that by the end of the term we will resolve many problems and that the list of lost opportunities will be shorter.

Hungary: Kovacs on Hungarian-Slovak Treaty Ratification

AU2803171396 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 28 Mar 96 p 3

[Interview with Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs by Miklos Ujvari; place and date not given: "Hungary Accepts Bratislava's Decision"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ujvari] The Slovak Parliament has ratified the Slovak-Hungarian basic treaty with restrictive and interpretative supplements. Is this acceptable for the Hungarian Government?

[Kovacs] I regard the decision to ratify the document as favorable: the last obstacle hindering the implementation of the treaty has disappeared with this decision. The basic treaty will thus encourage bilateral relations and will provide guarantees for the Slovaks in Hungary and the Hungarians in Slovakia in exercising their

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rights. At the same time, I do not regard as favorable the interpretative supplements adopted together with the basic treaty. Unilateral and restrictive interpretation of a signed treaty is a sign of a desire to implement it not according to its letter. However, I do not regard the supplements as tragic, either, because these supplements do not modify the treaty and do not have legal consequences.

[Ujvari] According to a sentence of the Slovak decision, collective rights cannot be asserted in any form in Slovakia. Is this in harmony with the treaty?

[Civics] The Council of Europe Proposal No 1,201, a proposal that is also present in the basic treaty, is decisive in this respect; according to this proposal, in areas where national minorities form the majority of the population, they have the right to have local or autonomous local administration and special status. I think that a statement contradicting the basic treaty or the relevant documents also accepted by Slovakia contradicts the logic of international rights and obligations.

[Ujvari] According to some experts, in this case, the best thing for the Hungarian Government is to refrain from exchanging the ratified documents; in other words, not to validate the agreement.

[Kovacs] The Hungarian side is ready to exchange the ratified documents, but this does not mean the exchange of unilateral interpretation documents as well. The latter is not part of the basic treaty; at most, we can regard the supplements as information.

[Ujvari] In the one year that has passed since the signing of the basic treaty and its ratification, the Slovak Parliament adopted numerous laws that have a detrimental effect on the national minorities living there. Have the Hungarian side and the ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia paid too big a price for this basic treaty?

[Kovacs] Those who connect the basic treaty with the law on the state language, the law on administrative division, or the modification of the penal code are moving as far from reality as those who connect the dawn wi[illegible] the cock's crow.

[Ujvari] However, many people claim that the aforementioned laws were the condition of the smaller Slovak governing parties for ratifying the basic treaty.

[Kovacs] Those who claim this are not aware of the Slovak Government program that foretold the legislation of these laws. I am convinced that they would have legislated these laws in any case. The basic treaty is important because it could reduce the harmful effects of these laws, and it provides international guarantees against the elements of the aforementioned laws that limit the national minority laws.

[Ujvari] The Hungarian reactions to the adoption of the aforementioned four laws seemed to have been weaker than usual....

[Kovacs] We did not regard it as expedient to make a statement in the course of the ratification process, a statement that would have benefited the forces opposing the basic treaty. We should not focus on protesting individual laws; instead, we should encourage Slovakia to take steps that ease the effects that harm the national minority rights. This is why we think it is important that a law stipulating the use of the national minorities' language should eliminate the deficiencies of the language law. At our meeting in Prague last week, Slovak Foreign Minister Juraj Schenk firmly stated that a national minority language law was being formulated at the Cultural Ministry in Bratislava. He added that the new Slovak public administration law will not have a negative effect on the national minorities.

[Ujvari] Many people claim that Vladimir Meciar is making a mockery of both the national minority rights and democracy in general, and is returning to dictatorship. How does all this affect the Slovak-Hungarian relations?

[Kovacs] With each such step, the Slovak Government must face its own citizens and every international organization of which Slovakia is a member or wants to become a member.

[Ujvari] The ethnic Hungarian parties in Slovakia apparently want to turn to the Council of Europe because of the ratification text. What is your opinion about this?

[Kovacs] It is up to them to decide on this. Slovakia's membership in the Council of Europe enables this, and I understand that they feel this step is necessary.

Hungary: Editorial Assesses Treaty With Slovakia

AU2803171896 Budapest MAGYAR NEMZET in Hungarian 28 Mar 96 p 8

[Editorial by Lajos Pletsch: "Bratislava Lament"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Actually, nothing surprising has taken place. Vladimir Meciar fulfilled his promise, and the Slovak Parliament has finally ratified the basic treaty signed in March 1995. It is true that the Slovak Parliament also adopted a supplementary decision, a restrictive and limiting one, but one could expect that, too. The surprise would have been if all this had not taken place.

According to the prime minister's scenario, the timing was not accidental, either. Meciar has been well aware

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of the fact that there is a price to the ratification of the basic treaty by the Slovak Parliament, and he was ready to pay the price, by winning the support of the extremist coalition partners, particularly that of the Slovak National Party. Meciar paid with the language law, the reform of the administrative division, and finally with the modification of the Penal Code. Nor is it accidental that all the aforementioned three actions modifying the domestic legal order in one direction aim against the ethnic Hungarian minority living in Slovakia.

The timing is perfect also in the sense that the ratification preceded the EU intergovernmental revision conference in Torino by only two days, a conference in which the planned EU expansion is one of the major issues on the agenda. And Bratislava repeatedly pointed out that it is striving to join the EU and the NATO together with its partners in the region, and simultaneously with them. And the West—from Washington to Brussels—made it absolutely clear that improving relations with the neighbors is one of the major preconditions of integration and, from this point of view, the West regards the basic treaty as some kind of a particular guarantee and an organic part of rapprochement.

One could argue for a long time whether the supplement to the treaty will extract the basic treaty's "1,201 poison tooth" by clearly rejecting the collective national minority rights and all forms of autonomy. Thus, whatever the ethnic Hungarian minority might have gained on the international level, they immediately lost at the Bratislava customs. Nevertheless, Slovakia still hopes that by ratifying the basic treaty, it can only be a winner on the front of European integration.

However, it would not be decent to only lament over the ratification of the treaty because, although with generalities only, with this international legal document, Bratislava has obliged itself to improve its relations with Hungary and to guarantee the rights of national minorities. In other words, this way there are definitely better chances for normalization and international verification. If, however, all this did not take place this way, and with the basic treaty it was only Bratislava that got closer to the integration organizations, all this would place a mark of shame not only on Slovakia's prestige.

Hungary: OECD Officially Admits Hungary

LD2903102196 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1000 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hungary has become an official member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD]. The accession document was signed by Imre Dunai, minister of industry and trade, with the organization's secretary-general in Paris. Until now, the only OECD member in our region was the Czech Republic. Hungary's accession will become legally valid when the National Assembly ratifies the document.

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B-H: Izetbegovic Views Chances for Federation

AU2803180996 Sarajevo LJILJAN in Serbo-Croatian 27 Mar 96 pp 4-5

[Interview with Alija Izetbegovic, president of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, by Dzemaludin Latic; place and date not given: "The Event in Podgorelica Near Fojnica Was Our Big Mistake"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Latic] Let us start with an inevitable question in this situation. How are you and are you feeling better?

[Izetbegovic] I am fine and I am feeling well, thank God.

[Latic] You are supposed to go to Slovenia for a medical checkup and rehabilitation. When will you go there, and how long will you stay?

[Izetbegovic] I am not going to Slovenia. I thanked President Kucan for his really generous and kind invitation. I have full confidence in our physicians, though. They passed a test when they dealt with much more difficult cases, and I feel I will recover here in Bosnia much sooner. I think it is not very honest to praise our physicians, telling them they are "heroes in white," and then as soon as problems occur, flee to Slovenia. After all, in matters of life and death I am a fatalist. Of course, one ought to take care, but it is not good to flee from death head over heels, so to say. It does not help. Both you and I will have our judgment days. One cannot evade it. And now, one can sense in the air that freedom and spring are coming, which I find particularly enjoyable here in Bosnia, and that is giving me back strength.

[Latic] Immediately after you were taken to the hospital, the media began speculating about the causes that contributed to your illness. So they mentioned the Rome agreement, the visit to the cemetery of fallen soldiers, Silajdzic's departure, exhaustion, worries.... What do you personally think caused your illness, and what do you think about such speculations in the media?

[Izetbegovic] To tell you the truth, I do not know. I guess all those things together and some other things you have not mentioned caused my illness. Still, I think I was quite exhausted, and that is the main cause. The last time I had a free day was in August 1991, and never again thereafter, until this stay in hospital. If nothing else, at least I have had some rest now in the hospital.

[Latic] It seems that the visit to Rome was indeed an event with a negative omen. It appears that it was much more significant than we have been able to realize. After all, it happened so suddenly, did it not? Our public, if I may say, was shocked, particularly the Bosniaks in Herzegovina. What actually did happen in Rome? What solution were you offered? What were your dilemmas? How did the other protagonists behave in Rome? Can you explain the Rome meeting in broader terms to our public?

[Izetbegovic] I could not quite agree with you when speaking about the importance of the Rome meeting. We neither lost nor gained anything that is particularly important. The Croats rejected Koschick's plan, whereas Europe, in its well-known style, avoided making decisions. Are you surprised and is this anything new? Were not the Europeans telling us at the most difficult times of the genocide against us: Reach an accord, you have no other choice? With whom were we supposed to reach an accord—with murderers, perhaps? Therefore, I do not understand why anybody would be shocked or disappointed now. Everything has already been seen or experienced once. Koschnick's plan and his larger, central district was only a draft, and it was not something that we had and then lost in Rome.

The basic thing that the public ought to know in order to understand the Rome meeting is that the EU had already abandoned Koschnick's plan when we arrived there. They were already in session, searching for a so-called mutually acceptable solution. The German representative to the EU told our expert Kasim Begic quite clearly: "If you do not reach an agreement today, the EU will withdraw from Mostar within three days." In such a situation I had just one goal: The committment by the Croatian side to accept the freedom of movement and the deployment of a mixed police force in the city. I knew this was not going to be fully accomplished, but it was important to maintain the world's pressure in that direction and to keep it equally strong. I think that the recent conference in Geneva confirmed I was right. As for the overall atmosphere at the Rome conference, it was indeed hellish, because the entire previous night and the following day three meetings were going on in three rooms, and more and more new papers were being produced, which were rejected, modified, amended, and rejected again. I suggested to our journalist who was writing a report from Geneva—it was Sunday evening—to start her report with the words: "This is a madhouse." Fortunately, she did not do that, and she wrote something similar.

[Latic] Mr. President, with your illness the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosniak people have faced considerable, although expected, challenges. First, have the signatory countries of the Dayton accord left the integral Bosnia-Herzegovina in a lurch? We have an impression that after Dayton some sort of promotion of entities began, rather than of the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a multinational state, and that the

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concept of nation states in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been accepted, particularly by the Europeans.... In fact, in yesterday's issue of SLOBODNA DALMACIJA Mr. Zubak maintains that Bosnia-Herzegovina is possible only as a federal-confederal state. It seems that new dark clouds are appearing in the sky over Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosniak people as the international community is considering some of these adventures. In a recent interview you said that you were not sure that our public was aware of how serious the situation was. Did you have in mind the same things?

[Izetbegovic] I think this is the right question, rather than topics discussed in Rome. The forces supporting Bosnia's disintegration, both from inside and outside, are on the offensive. I am most concerned about the fact that even after Dayton ethnic cleansing continues. And the most important provision of the Dayton accords for Bosnia-Herzegovina by far is the one anticipating gradual ethnic reintegration. The return of displaced population is not coming to realization, and for the time being we see no way to make things go in a positive direction. This is the greatest problem and the greatest threat to Bosnia.

Attempts are being made to convince the world that everyone is equally to blame, that the legal Bosnian authorities are not immune to narrow-mindedness and nationalism, and that Bosnia is not possible. Some of our mistakes, and we indeed made some, are being used by this poisonous propaganda. Our propaganda is for a considerable part wrong as well. The media are simply competing in showing injustice and crimes done by Serbs or Croats against Bosniaks. Of course, crimes are not to be buried in silence or hushed up, but is there anything good happening between these three peoples? Is there a single gesture of kindness between people of different religions or nationalities in this Bosnia of ours? I do not believe such gestures have not happened, but the media are constantly keeping silent about them, out of reasons totally incomprehensible to me. And this is precisely what should be stressed in the current siutation. Because, to show solely animosity between the three peoples in Bosnia is nothing else than to prove that Bosnia is not viable, and this job is already being done quite well by [Serb official Momcilo] Krajisnik and [former Croat leader of Herzeg-Bosnia Mate] Boban.

I guess our task is to prove that things are different. Our task is to find positive examples and promote them. Of course, we are not supposed to invent them. You ask me whether the world has accepted the concept of nation-states in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The problem is not whether the world has accepted it. The problem is that we have obviously accepted it, or at least we are acting as if we did. For instance, look at some articles in our press, and even in your paper. Reading them, your conviction that Bosnia as a multinational state is possible is not growing stronger. On the contrary.

[Latic] I think we are all making efforts to promote Bosnia on any occasion, but after having found one or two Iranian nationals near Fojnica, the Americans have begun dictating conditions and which staff is to be taken, which infringes upon the sovereignty of our state. It is no longer a secret that they want to overthrow the Izetbegovic administration. Its possible fault because of ties with the Islamic world, and particularly with Iran, during the aggression, when no one else wanted to give a single bullet to the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina, is said to be the main reason. How do you comment on this?

[Izetbegovic] Well, I will tell you my opinion. First of all, the event in Podgorelica near Fojnica was our big mistake and violation of what we signed. Somebody had to take the consequences, and in a democracy those are always the leading people. And now, let me ask you something: Will you, or will all of us be happier if I confirm the hidden implication in your question that the United States is our enemy?

[Latic] I did not say that the United States is an enemy, but I do not understand some moves by the Implementation Force [IFOR] and some announcements from Washington regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina and its legal authorities....

[Izetbegovic] Well, all right, but I ask you whether Bosnia would be safer if we decide that the United States and, together with it, 10 or so important countries in the world, are enemies. If we do so, what shall we do with that fact? What to do with it? I think that the United States is not an enemy, but we can make one out of it. The United States will be our friend if it sees for itself that the survival of Bosnia as an integral state is in its own interest as well. If that is so, we should take action in that direction, because we must have the United States by our side. In the situation as it is, this is the question of Bosnia's and our people's survival. This is the only realistic policy, or in short, that is politics, because unrealistic policy is not politics, it is nonsense. Iran proved itself as our genuine friend during the war, but Iran is far away, whereas our enemies are quite near, we can almost touch each other. Speaking of allies, my full answer reads: We must have the United States and the Islamic world by our side, and to the greatest possible extent the rest of the world as well. This is possible to accomplish, and that ought to be our policy.

[Latic] If I may observe, the United States is not any closer either, it is also far away, so let me ask you

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one more question in conclusion: Do you have any knowledge of whether the EU really supports the project of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, or has it changed its mind since the Rome meeting?

[Izetbegovic] You are wrong. The United States set its foot in Europe a long time ago, and it is very close, do you not see that? As for the EU, I think it still supports the federation project. This is one of the reasons why it went for a compromise in Rome. Otherwise it would have simulated a principled attitude and let things take their own course. And you know what that means, for time does not work for the Federation, it works against it. Speaking of Europe, certain unpleasant doubts rise from France's behavior, and some statements that I have just heard. However, it is too early to comment on them, for they are quite fresh and I am not familiar with the context. Bad news never comes too late. There is no reason for us to rush it, it will knock on our doors by itself.

B-H: FM Prlic Interviewed on Implementation

AU2803161496 Zagreb HRVATSKI OBZOR in Serbo-Croatian 25 Mar 96 pp 34-35

[Interview with Dr. Jadranko Prlic, foreign affairs minister in the Bosnia-Herzegovina Government, by Goran Rosic; place and date not given: "I Am Not a Political Adventurer"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Rosic] The Dayton agreement has brought into this area completely new relations among all the sides, which until only yesterday were still at war. One can see many improvements, but there are also certain problems for which one cannot see any solutions at all. To what extent are you satisfied with its implementation?

[Prlic] The Dayton agreement is an expression of the will of all the relevant factors in the crisis on the territory of the former SFRY [Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia]—basically, the Croats, the Serbs, and the Bosniaks-Muslims. It is not a free expression of their will, because in the process of reaching the agreement the international mediators have had the crucial role, but precisely in that manner, with extreme pressure, a compromise was reached. It is true that it is a compromise that satisfies none of the sides. However, in precisely that dissatisfaction on the part of everybody, it is reflected that the agreement is in fact optimum, given the historical and other circumstances. The implementation of the military part of the agreement is being carried out on the ground without significant difficulties, including even the measures to establish confidence, particularly within the Joint Military Board, which must be finished within D+120 days. Furthermore, the Federal Army training and armament program has also begun. In Ankara, a meeting was concluded, which was only one in a series of attempts to provide the $700-800 million necessary to arm and train 55,000 members of the Federal Army. True, that meeting was unsuccessful, but because of the importance of the problem, that is, because of the importance of the Federal Army as the factor of stability in this area, one can expect changes in many countries in the approach to solving this problem.

[Rosic] Unlike the military, the implementation of the civilian part of the agreement is at a standstill. Why is that so?

[Prlic] It is so mostly because the civilian part is much more complicated. There are very many delicate problems, but one particular difficulty is the situation related to the territorial takeover in the outskirts of Sarajevo by the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[Rosic] What do you mean by that precisely?

[Prlic] Many problems occurred there, but as the largest problem I want to point out the large-scale departure of the Serb population from that area. That has been the heaviest slap in the face of the peace process so far. Everybody bears a part of the responsibility for that departure, but the Serb leadership from Pale bears the largest responsibility because that exodus, within their concept of creating an ethnically cleansed Serb Republic, is the precondition for the dissolution of Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the other hand, I think that the central authorities have not done enough to prevent the departure of the Serbs, and the international community is guilty because they have not provided a sufficient number of policemen within the framework of the international forces as envisaged.

[Rosic] What have the central authorities failed to do?

[Prlic] I think that the Serb population should have been given much greater guarantees. I do not claim that those guarantees would have yielded different results, but I think that firm enough guarantees have not been given at the right time to create a platform for the Serbs to stay in larger numbers.

[Rosic] What results, within the implementation of the civilian part of the Dayton agreement, have you achieved so far in the negotiations with the representatives of the Serb entity?

[Prlic] We have made modest progress. We intend to normalize the situation and establish mutual relations, but I am not sure that the conditions for the implementation and establishment of the state envisaged by the Dayton agreement have been created.

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[Rosic] As matters stand now, it seems that the biggest problems will be with the free elections and the return of refugees. What actions have been undertaken regarding that?

[Prlic] The elections will pass without significant problems. That is my stand, and I have expressed it to all the representatives of the international community. The return of refugees is a much more complicated question, although it is somehow linked to the elections. The elections are, primarily, necessary in order to overcome this situation in which Bosnia-Herzegovina finds itself, but the elections are also not enough. Before that, we have to form the appropriate state institutions and provide incentives for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which will create a basis for a better quality life in this area. In such an atmosphere of economic prosperity, it will be much more difficult for the autistic tendencies, which can be noticed in certain parts of all three constituent nations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, to appear.

[Rosic] There is a thesis that the elections should result in the removal of all existing structures of authority in all three nations. According to the advocates of that thesis, only then would Bosnia-Herzegovina be able to start living as a state. Can you comment on that?

[Prlic] This thesis only shows that there are different opinions on how to overcome this situation. If we want to develop democracy, then there is a place for this thesis, but the nations in Bosnia-Herzegovina will decide about it, just as they will decide about all other theses.

[Rosic] However, this thesis, I think, points to another fact. The Dayton agreement has largely been imposed, the norms for the return of the people to their hearths have been prescribed, it has been conditioned in many ways, and by preelection pressures, manipulations, and so on, one wants to enable the election result desired by the advocates of this or that thesis. So, one either imposes everything, or at least tries to impose. What sense does that future state, which is already now to a great extent a protectorate of the international community, then have?

[Prlic] I do not think so. The international community is not imposing anything, but just looking for a solution, as the nations living here have been incapable of finding one. I do not agree with anyone who thinks that the international community enjoys it here. They are trying to get out of here as soon as possible. Regarding the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina only, it is a fact that it has never functioned as a sovereign state in its history. As long as its nations are not capable of choosing their representatives and governing the state independently, then it is necessary that the international community participate. I thus understand the involvement of the international community in exactly that way.

[Rosic] Bosnia-Herzegovina has also been mentioned as a factor over which the former SFRY could be reintegrated. What do you think about such a possibility?

[Prlic] I think that such a reintegration has been mentioned rather in order to prevent an attempt of any kind to cooperate with one's neighbors than as a realistic possibility. None of the relevant factors in world politics mention such a possibility. When talking about the regional approach of the European Union [EU], it is absolutely not a reincarnation of the former Yugoslavia, but the different modalities of involvement by this group of countries in European integration. After all, the spreading of the EU has so far been done through groups of countries. So I think there is nothing to a reincarnation of the former state. On the other hand, we do not accept such initiatives, which are growing stronger, and coming from the East, in the sense of certain Balkan associations. We can talk, on the bilateral level, only about the modalities of economic and communications links, but constitutional linking is out of the question, and I will be against it.

[Rosic] Some individuals from the Bosniak-Muslim leadership do not rule out such a possibility. Proof of that is the joint letter of understanding that President Milosevic and President Izetbegovic gave to Warren Christopher in Dayton. What is your comment on that?

[Prlic] That is not a realistic thing, and I think that the general public has not been informed objectively. That letter was just an indication of possible arrangements, but we are still far even from the establishment of diplomatic relations envisaged by that letter. The question of how this area will become a free trade zone is still open. One should not either accept or refuse that in advance.

[Rosic] What has been done in the sphere of the economic reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Prlic] In the past month, since my arrival in Sarajevo, we have been heavily engaging ourselves in that field. We have contacted all the countries that are potential donors to Bosnia-Herzegovina's reconstruction, and almost everywhere the doors were open for us. We have offered them 996 projects that we had prepared, and from now on everything that happens will depend mostly upon ourselves. The first thing we have to do is to create a strong economic system in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[Rosic] What do those 996 projects deal with?

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[Prlic] They deal with almost all spheres of life—industry, health care, water supply, education, and so on.

[Rosic] Can you single out some capital projects?

[Prlic] The reopening of Sarajevo Airport, the reconstruction of the north-south railroad, the building of a bridge at Orasje, the north-south superhighway from Bosanski Samac to Opuzen, and so on. Building houses is not a bit less important. So it is a comprehensive program for the reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[Rosic] In conclusion, let us talk a bit about the relations between the two partners within the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, about which the international community, as well as we in Croatia, has recently been particularly concerned. Namely, there have been incessant incidents in the normalization of relations following meetings of the highest delegations of Croatia and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Why is that so?

[Prlic] Without an appropriate relation between the Croats and Bosniak-Muslims there is neither a Federation, nor the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina. All the things happening around the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina are in fact a consequence of the national atavisms and autisms that are still working here, because of which many cannot realize what will happen in six months or in a year, but only in that way can one see what is in the real interests of both nations. We, too, who are leading those nations, must be aware of our historical responsibility in relation to the office we discharge. I myself will not take my people into any kind of national adventure. That is the matter of the state policy of the Republic of Croatia and President Tudjman. I deem that he has gotten doubtless and exclusive political authority with the Croatian nation on the whole, and also with the majority of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The question of the transmission and implementation of the whole of that policy is and will be the largest moot point regarding the Croats. On the other hand, the Bosniaks-Muslims need a period of sobering up from the desires they have had, and the desires that appear, and from the concrete behavior on the outskirts of Sarajevo, which could bring into question the possibility of the existence of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a the multiethnic and multicultural state community that has always been talked about. I think it is out of place to talk about such a Bosnia-Herzegovina when there are 35 Bosniak-Muslims, one Croat, and one Serb in the Cantonal Assembly of Sarajevo today. Thus a perfectly clear message and argument to anybody who favors the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina can be had, so they can keep working on that, so that division can be the final result of the whole of this peace process.

[Box, p 35]

[Rosic] It is known that in almost all the diplomatic missions of the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina there is a majority of Bosniak-Muslim personnel. When can we expect it to be reorganized?

[Prlic] I have already composed the internal reorganization of the ministries and gotten consent for that. I expect it will be the same with the outside network, within which some kind of national balancing will be carried out. Furthermore, approximately one hundred employees will be removed. The number of missions will increase.

[Rosic] Is there political consensus about those changes?

[Prlic] There are political and other preconditions for me to carry that out. The only critical thing is an adequate number of qualified Croatian personnel who would take over those jobs. However, all of them—saying this I think of all new employees—must regardless of nationality fulfill certain criteria. First of all, they must speak at least one foreign language, and have certain expert knowledge.

[Rosic] What will be the share of Croatian personnel in the new distribution of jobs?

[Prlic] At this moment I am ready to employ 50-60 Croatian workers, either at the ministry or abroad, but under the condition that they fulfill the aforementioned criteria. In that regard I have sent a letter to the party.

B-H: PM Muratovic, OSCE Official Discuss Elections

AU2803191996 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hasan Muratovic, prime minister of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, had talks in Sarajevo today with Flavio Cotti, chairman of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], about the organization of the forthcoming free elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina and trials of war criminals.

It was concluded that all sides should cooperate with the UN Tribunal for War Crimes committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia and that the media influence is a very important factor during elections. We cannot talk about any conditions for elections while war criminals [word indistinct] in the politics of almost two-thirds of the country. We demand that the international community exert pressure on those people who can extradite war criminals, Prime Minister Muratovic pointed out. It was asserted that the reconstruction of

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Bosnia-Herzegovina is a (?priority) task whose realization should begin as soon as possible.

Prime Minister Muratovic said that only those people who have jobs and [word indistinct] are really free. He pointed out that only under these conditions can one one talk about democracy. [Words indistinct] as if everything will be done for the elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina to be held within the term envisaged by the Dayton peace agreement. Also touched upon was the way to enable refugees in Bosnia-Herzegovina to freely [word indistinct].

B-H: Interview With Croat Leader Kljujic

LD2603201096 Sarajevo Televizija Bosne i Hercegovine in Serbo-Croatian 2232 GMT 23 Mar 96

[Interview with Stjepan Kljujic, a Croat member of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency, by Arijana Saracevic-Helac—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Saracevic-Helac] Good evening, dear viewers. Good evening, Mr. Kljujic.

[Kljujic] Good evening to you and your viewers.

[Helac] Thank you. Last week the Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency held a continuous five-day session. The public was presented with a statement containing some general conclusions. What preceded such a long session?

[Kljujic] I believe it was a case of plain misinformation. We did not hold a five-day session nor was there a problem as the papers made out. It was a journalistic invention—as simple as that.

The session at which the change of the head of the Agency for Documentation and Information [ADI] was decided lasted a short time, just as the session at which he was appointed did not last long.

I must say that the reports in the press were contrary to the events as they really happened. When he was appointed I was the only one against. The decision about his dismissal was made unanimously. It was evident that U.S. pressure was exceptionally strong. Those who appointed him at that time did not listen to the arguments I put forward.

It is clear that we must have an ADI. But it is also clear that it must be made up of forces which showed their patriotism toward Bosnia-Herzegovina during the war. The management of such an agency should be multinational and not chosen according to party affiliation.

Because not enough facts were known, there was a lot of speculation. In fact everything is very simple. There is an old Chinese proverb—it is better to turn back after half the wrong road has been crossed than to continue to the very end.

I believe we will persist with the work of the agency but we must find instruments to control it and avoid the possibility of its being abused. [passage omitted]

During its history, Sarajevo, an exceptional city because of its vitality and its tolerance, has been exposed several times to onslaughts from the rural population and, after wars, to victorious armies. This happened in 1918 when Vojvoda Stepa entered with his soldiers; it happened in 1945 during Djuro Pucar's entry to the city; attempts are being made to do the same now.

Sarajevo cannot be a canton; especially a one-party canton or, even worse, the canton of one party faction. [passage omitted]

Today the ones who have set up the canton [changes thought], to tell you the truth, in my opinion this Mrs. Hazovic [president of the newly formed Sarajevo canton] is extremely brave. I would not dare to do what she did. Above all, I would be ashamed to preside over a body with 33 out of its 35 members belonging to one nationality.

So, I do not know what Mr. Zubak wants. But I want, and I do have the moral right to say this, because of the whole establishment [as heard], the leadership of Sarajevo [corrects himself] Bosnia-Herzegovina, I am the only one who is a native Sarajevan. I want Sarajevo to be set up as a district where all citizens and nationalities are equal. [passage omitted]

So, the ones who want Bosnia-Herzegovina must protect Sarajevo as a city, as a metropolis, both of the federation and the republic. This does not conflict with the decision on setting up the canton. [passage omitted]

When Latic writes in LJILJAN that Sarajevo will be the capital of the Bosniaks and all European Muslims, I ask him, and what will happen to the Serbs, Croats, and the citizens of European views who fought for this Sarajevo? [passage omitted]

The next war does not have to be an armed one. It may be an economic war, a blockade. You know that we are trapped; surrounded by all sides. We cannot go out. [passage omitted]

So what will happen? The faction of the Party of Democratic Action [SDA], which so aggressively attacks Sarajevo, may settle people here. They may win the elections, but they will not have the operational human resources to manage a state. It is a shortsighted policy. One of the most important recent events was the Mr. Kupusovic's resignation. That man, a university lecturer, without any doubt a member of the SDA,

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came to the conclusion that making the city a canton could not be done with Sarajevo.

So, I am not interested in what Ganic and Zubak are negotiating. They have no authority over Sarajevo. This is not a federation of two parties and two factions. [passage omitted]

[Helac] Many people maintain that the solution for Mostar is the basis of a solution for the federation. What do you say to this?

[Kljujic] It is not true. Mostar is the consequence of the federation project's failure. You must know that these people, allow me to say that I was the father of the federation before the war, that these people cannot reach an agreement. As long as Markovic stays in Capljina, Mlaco in Bugojno, the other Markovic in Stolac, and that lady in Vares, there will be no federation [sentence as heard].

Two years have passed and they have not moved an inch. But, the most important thing is that the people and the army accepted the federation the same day it was proclaimed.

That day, 18 March 1994, was the happiest day of my life. We managed to stop the war. We forced both Zagreb and Sarajevo to stop the war. Then we expected the greatest culprits for this war and for everything that happened during the war to be removed. Instead we allowed all those people to implement the federation. The ones who led the war and who were de facto against the federation cannot implement the federation.

The same is true if we want the Dayton agreement within the republic to be implemented by Krajisnik, Karadzic, and that gang.

The international community made a mistake in not having removed Mladic and Krajisnik, especially Krajisnik, he is the most dangerous of them all. [passage omitted]

I will tell you openly. Those two parties [SDA and Croatian Democratic Union] do not like each other. I may be the only one in Bosnia-Herzegovina to know them all personally. But they agree. In half an hour they agree to form two governments. There are no problems there. But then those two governments cannot solve a single problem. [passage omitted]

And then they form a council for the federation implementation whose members are the ones who should be implementing it. And now I hear they want some kind of forum.

The problem with the federation is in the people in power. The problem is not in the federation program. The people and the army accepted the federation the same day it was proclaimed. The only ones who have not accepted it are the political parties leading those two nations. They have usurped the exclusive right to represent the two nations. And it is not right. [passage omitted]

How can we reintegrate when those fascists blew us a parting kiss by burning down everything in sight? The departure of the Serb entity from the areas of Sarajevo's outer city was a historical image of barbarism. Ultimately, it is the Serb people who will foot the bill. Because the same people who had properties, houses, and apartments here are now going to centers of collective accommodation. Moreover, this war showed that no place in the world welcomes refugees. [passage omitted]

The reasons for slowing down the implementation process of the federation, the reintegration, and the peace process in the region lie exclusively with the cliques who cling to power at any price. [passage omitted]

Bosnia's tragedy lies in the fact that, the very moment the Dayton accord started to be implemented, the Patriotic Front fell apart. Why? It fell apart on fundamental issues. We did not fight for someone to stay in power. We fought to defend ourselves against the chetniks to preserve Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Now, suddenly the clique in power springs up. It is sacrosanct. The people are suddenly, after Dayton, left in limbo. Citizens are starting to take stock. Here, we work practically without pay; in the last three, four months we received some 200 German marks, in dinars. And while we are working others have made money, concluded their businesses, etc.

Unlike the soldiers, the [Bosnian] army leadership has everything. We did not want to create a state with great social differences. I would personally like a state in which the most capable people, the best businessmen, and the most diligent people, would all earn as much as they please. All of us were loyal to the Patriotic Front but when the war was over they [the Bosnian leadership] told us: We are in power and you are not. Well, those in power will have to think about the community. They will have to receive invalids, resolve the issue of pensioners, the issue of old savings—they will have many responsibilities. I know them well and I do not understand their struggle for power because that is not something a smart man would concened about now. This country is not very prosperous. Look at our politicians smiling as they meet Christopher or someone else. It is easy for Christopher to smile. His people are not hungry, our people are. [passage omitted]

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[Helac] In your opinion, who is not in favor of the federation?

[Kljujic] The local authorities on both sides are not for the federation. Do not think that it is only people down there in Herzegovina who are against the federation. There are lots of people in central Bosnia against the federation. These are certain prominent parties and leaders. They should be removed if we want the federation. And the federation is the only way out. The federation is the only modus vivendi for the survival of both the Muslims and the Croats. [passage omitted]

[Helac] You said that the local authorities are not in favor of the federation. Is the Croatian nation interested in the federation?

[Kljujic] The Croatian nation voted for Bosnia and the federation, you know, and you can be sure that for the Croatian people the federation is the only solution. Those who left and are now returning, they come and I say to them, Bosnians [Bosnjo—pejorative name for Bosnians] there is nowhere better than Bosnia. And I think that Zagreb has now at last accepted that policy—you know, I rarely have contacts with them, that is, I have my direction and they have theirs, but I think that their resistance has at last been broken and that Croatia is indeed in favor of the federation, but this has to be put to the test.

[Helac] What does Zagreb actually want for the Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Kljujic] I don't know what Zagreb wants. I know that they used us badly and that in representing us they sold us out. They traded the most essential Croat lands in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Posavina and central Bosnia. Today in the so-called Herzeg-Bosnia, I don't think there are more than 39 percent of Croat people from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Zagreb did not have the right to sell out the Bosnian Croats nor did it have the right to represent them. That does not mean that the Bosnian Croats should not look to Zagreb for support. On the contrary, I think that Zagreb should have supported us, but not in the way it did. Zagreb was simply creating its own state—and why should it not get Slavonia or the Knin Krajina in return for Posavina? I don't condemn them as people who were looking after their own interests, but I do condemn them for sacrificing me and others for their own good.

On the other hand, when I saw Madeleine Albright in Vukovar the other evening—it would have been clear even to a blind man who committed the crime against Croatia. Offering the hand of friendship to Milosevic was in fact the greatest betrayal of the Croatian people, and will one day be recorded as such in history, as the greatest tragedy of the Croatian people. Instead of forming a joint antifascist defense bloc—and if we had, we would certainly have been free by mid-1993 and would certainly have resisted that fascism—there was speculation, which in the end was to the detriment of both the Croat and Muslim people and to the detriment of both countries. That is why we considered the creation of the federation the best act which could occur at that time. [passage omitted]

[Helac] The people know you as an expert on the mentality of Bosnians and Herzegovinians. Are you a figure of authority in Herzegovina?

[Kljujic] It is difficult to judge this by media reports. I know that many people there cannot voice their opinions. It is difficult to assess what authority means today. That is why I feel the elections will bring changes. When one is alone in that voting booth, when he is thinking [changes thought], the only thing that I am certain of is that the media are giving a false picture of the current situation. Many people are appearing every day, commenting on the situation. Remember when the shelling was in progress, all those spokesmen [as heard]. However, I think that a great number of people from Herzegovina still support Bosnia and the program which enabled us to win the elections and the [independence] referendum. [passage omitted]

[Helac] Does that mean that the Croats are not an equal people in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Kljujic] They were not equal in the previous regime, and they will not be equal in this regime if there are no guarantees. You can say whatever you like, but how can I discuss the equality of the Croat people in Sarajevo when, out of all the managing directors in all companies, only the director of the city cemetery is Croat. [passage omitted]

[Helac] That is not the way to measure the equality of a people.

[Kljujic] That is one of the ways and a very important one. Before the war there were nine banks in Sarajevo and Serbs were managing directors of eight. So I could not get a loan and some other people could. But it is not up to the two of us to discuss what is equality. We should leave it to experts. But I will never give up fighting for the equality of all people, not only Croats.

While I was the leader of the Croat people, this was my primary task—Bosnia-Herzegovina as a sovereign state, equal to all other republics of the former Yugoslavia at that particular time and in the independent state later. And as a Croat, I have fought for the equality of the Croat people. I believe these issues have to be solved as soon as possible, so that people can start working.

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When a consensus is achieved on national, religious, and cultural freedom, it will be upheld forever.

As for Mostar, the situation there is extremely difficult. But we must not make a further mistake and make demands for Sarajevo on the basis of Mostar. Let the ruling parties compromise, let them create something good both in Sarajevo and Mostar. I agree with that.

[Helac] Did you visit the territory of so-called Herzeg-Bosnia during the war?

[Kljujic] No.

[Helac] Were you afraid, or....

[Kljujic] I was not afraid, but it would have been a pity if anything had happened to me. Would you have been sorry? I think it would have been a pity if anything had happened to me and I had had to leave my work unfinished.

[Helac] Will Herzeg-Bosnia be transformed into the federation?

[Kljujic] Certainly.

[Helac] How?

[Kljujic] I think that this is a question of the survival of the current political establishment. The moment we achieve a certain economic level, when everyone is able to live from his work, the transformation will take place. This is the ultimate aim. They [Herzeg-Bosnia] do not have the production capacity. Moreover, they cannot exist on their own.

Bosnia is too small a country to house so many separatist aspirations. The future is in a single state, but in a state which is not centralized. The enemies of Bosnia keep talking about a unitarian [unitarna] Bosnia. We do not want a unitarian Bosnia, we want Bosnia as a state, like all other states. But the economic and every other strength of Bosnia will lie in these diversities. [passage omitted]

These are the things we have to work on. Bosnia-Herzegovina can survive only as a state. Any other possibility, especially that of the division [changes thought], you will see what will happen to the Serb entity. It will ask to join us. However, after Dayton I believed we would create a West Germany and they would be East Germany. But we are a bit slow with this West Germany.

[Helac] You are the first leader of the [Bosnian] Croat people, the first chairman of the Croat Democratic Union. How do you see the fact that, at the moment, Bosnian Croats are led by a man who is originally not from here?

[Kljujic] Just as I can see that Ejup Ganic is one of the leaders of the Bosnian [Muslim] people. [passage omitted]

[Helac] As regards work in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina presidency, to what extent do your standpoints differ from those of Mr. Komsic?

[Kljujic] I have not really thought about this. In most instances we five [presidency members] have the same demands. I differ somewhat because I always make my views known. Now, for example, they want to recall Ambassador Ajanovic from Bonn. And I say, well, do you want to show me the minutes describing when you appointed him, because I was against his appointment at the time. I fight my corner. Sometimes I am a bit loud-mouthed, but my relations with Komsic are the same as with other presidency members.

[Helac] Recently there have been quite a few resignations, Mr. Kupusovic [mayor of Sarajevo], Mr. Orucevic [mayor of east Mostar], even Mr. Komsic [member of the Presidency]. Everyone says that a resignation is a matter of principle. Do you think it is time to resign?

[Kljujic] It is difficult that people should submit their resignations in two large cities, especially as these are people who have been doing their job. It is something to be analyzed and to be concerned about.

But I would not comment on Komsic's resignation because what he has written is not his view alone. On the contrary, I think that I have been advocating these principles much more vehemently than he has. I have said at a session that he does not have the right to quote that as his argument.

The presidency is [changes thought], when the presidency was renewed I was the happiest of men. I thought we had got seven patriots. But the power struggle is a strange thing. It sometimes reaches sick proportions. You know, taking jobs that do not belong to you, and so on.

Although I am someone who has been in public life before, as a journalist, and the publicity is not so important to me, I believe that all this has upset the balance in this team, the presidency, which has achieved many things. The presidency has done a lot. Today we have a state, two governments [republic and federal], cantonal governments, many companies have managing directors and boards. In 1992, 1993, and a good part of 1994, none of these existed. Everything was decided in this building. [passage omitted]

[Helac] Elections are coming. I do not want to talk about your new party. Do you think elections will take place?

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[Kljujic] They will not take place in the current conditions. As for me, I will take part with the same program. I was waiting for the war between the Croats and Muslims to end, then I formed a cohesive party—multinational, civic, a party fighting for a secular Bosnia. That will be the main issue at these elections. If there were elections right now, the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina would be voting for their future. I have to say that our citizens are far more intelligent than people think, or rather than the politicians think, but at the moment citizens do not have the possibility to express this. Everyone is concerned with how to survive, how to start working, how to fix the windows and doors, how to find an opportunity to have a bit of a rest. You know, if this state had the money, I would vote for all citizens to have two months' holiday, a month in the mountains and a month by the sea—we have earned that much after all our suffering.

[Helac] Who would pay for that?

[Kljujic] Bosnia will pay. One day, you can be sure, people will go to the seaside again. And one more thing, since this is a rare opportunity for me to say something on state television, allow me please. I will shortly be launching a campaign to preserve and take care of our cemeteries. I think that we need to launch a movement to make the cemeteries where our people are buried, particularly those from the war, into shrines. They should be places of pilgrimage and should be visited by all future generations. [passage omitted]

B-H: Bosnian Croat Given Death Sentence for War Crimes

AU2903132596 Paris AFP in English 1252 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 29 (AFP)—A Bosnian Croat was sentenced to death for war crimes Friday by a Bosnian Serb military court in the northern town of Banja Luka.

Ivan Stjepanovic, 26, was found guilty of killing two Serb civilians in 1992 and of taking part in the murder of six other people in three villages in northeastern Bosnia—Bosanska Bijela, Cerik and Bukvik.

The tribunal heard he had taken part in an armed attack on the villages, which left 73 people dead, as a member of the 108th Brigade of Croat forces in Bosnia. A Serb couple died when he bombed their home in Bukvik.

Defence lawyer Goran Majstorovic told AFP he would appeal against the judgment.

B-H: New Mostar Administrator To Assume Duties 20 Apr

AU2903154896 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 29 Mar 96

[Report by Mirsad Behram]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ricardo Perez Casado, the newly appointed EU administrator for Mostar, will not assume his duties in the town on the Neretva River until 20 April. This was stated at a regular news conference in the EU administration headquarters in Mostar today. Mirsad Behram has the details:

At the beginning of today's regular news conference, Ambassador Klaus Metcher, who is also Hans Koschnick's deputy, told journalists that, as a result of additional consultations and for some other practical reasons, Casado will arrive in Mostar on 20 April and not earlier, as had been announced. According to Metcher, the new administrator plans to retain the EU administration team as it is. However, in reply to a journalist's question, he said that some administration officials will leave this summer, when their terms of office expire.

Regarding Hans Koschnick, the journalists were told that his duties in Mostar will end on 31 March. Koschnick will stay in the town for a few more days for private reasons. [passage omitted]

B-H: Mostar Mayor Insists on Koschnick's Plan

AU2803195296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At today's news conference called by the Party of Democratic Action [SDA] of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mostar Mayor Safet Orucevic said that the new EU administrator for Mostar, Ricardo Perez Casado, will be required to implement the memorandum on understanding, Koschnick's plan, and all the decrees signed, or else it will be definitely clear that Koschnick's plan for Mostar is dead, and it will be necessary to return to the Dayton accord's Annex on Mostar.

Orucevic emphasized that the constitution of Canton 7 is a very important event, but said that we must not view its constitution from a position of self-satisfaction and triumphalism. Rather, we have to undertake operative measures and the implementation of all the agreements signed so far, said Orucevic. After this important step, we must not allow the continued obstruction of the signed agreements, particularly when speaking of the functioning of the canton with special status, Orucevic said.

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B-H: NATO General Sees IFOR Staying More Than 1 Year

BR2703104596 Copenhagen POLITIKEN in Danish 26 Mar 96 p 8

[Article by Jens Holsoe: "NATO Force Will Stay"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Split—NATO's Bosnia mission will last for several years. The idea that the entire force of 60,000 men could be pulled out again by December, as established by the Dayton agreement, is an illusion. Both politicians and military leaders are slowly coming to realize this.

It was the United States that firmly insisted that the NATO-led implementation force, IFOR, should only be in place for one year. The U.S. argument was that, in particular, the U.S. force of over 20,000 men should not be dragged down into the Bosnian quicksand. The warring parties should be separated militarily. Thereafter it would be up to the civilian side of the peace process to take care of a lasting order of peace.

"But we have to recognize that the mission cannot be completed within the very narrow framework of the Dayton agreement," a NATO general with responsibility for political planning said in a conversation with POLITIKEN.

"What we are working on now is the following: In the fall a large part of the U.S. troops stationed in northeastern Bosnia will be withdrawn. The United States will then be left with the expensive part of the operations—air support, gathering intelligence, and surveillance—while NATO's heavyweight European nations, primarily the United Kingdom and France but also Benelux and Germany, will maintain their contingents, perhaps even in a slightly expanded form."

Not Under UN Control

"Militarily the European NATO countries need a 'mission' in order to maintain solidarity and keep the troops in top shape. And once the national contingents are in place in Bosnia, which they are now, more or less, then it does not cost very much to keep them," goes the general's argument. "I do not know what we should call the new force, only that it must not be under UN control. It will be a challenge for the EU's leaders to clearly define their position here."

Last Sunday [24 March] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher gave the green light for NATO soldiers to take on more civilian, police-type tasks in tripartite Bosnia. It is here that a "presence" is needed if peace is not to crumble away in ethnic, religious, and political conflict.

"Our military mission has been completed," the NATO general added. "The three armies—the Bosnian, the Croatian, and the Serb—have largely followed all the provisions in the peace treaty about withdrawing from the front line, putting their heavy weapons in depots, and starting to send home the many conscripts. During this period NATO has realized that the three armies do not constitute a military threat. It is perhaps even more important that the Serb generals in particular have seen NATO in action and have recognized that they cannot do anything militarily as long as we are here. That makes peace more realistic."

NATO's generals are not particularly happy about getting involved in "civilian" tasks. But the criticism that was heard after IFOR soldiers simply looked on while Bosnian Serbs plundered and burned down Sarajevo's suburbs before they left the city has made an impression.

"We must recognize that we have the capacity to also patrol areas as support for the international police force and to take on other tasks. But we will only do so on the right military terms, in other words, not expose our soldiers to unnecessary risks," the general told POLITIKEN. [passage omitted]

B-H: Article Views U.S. Troops Staying Longer

AU2803145096 Ljubljana SVIJET in Serbo-Croatian 23 Mar 96 pp 24-25

[Article by Zlatko Dukic: "United Dubrave of America"]

[FBIS Translated Text] When NATO Secretary General Javier Solana landed in Dubrave base near Tuzla (actually, in Zivinice municipality) three months after the arrival of NATO Americans and curiously chatted with the locals in the company of Gen. George Joulwan, the reporters around the runway observed that the senior guest spent four entire minutes on the grounds of the above base. He then returned in the helicopter and in the company of two more helicopters fluttered across Mt. Majevica. His destination was Ugljevik, where the headquarters of the Russian NATO command is situated, and the nuance in the care and attention of Javier Solana did not escape notice: The same attention should be paid to Americans and Russians alike....

Base Entered Fields

This brief episode matches the image already formed on what it means rather than what was expected from the U.S. soldiers' deployment in the Tuzla district. According to data that is difficult to access, there are between 8,000 and 9,000 soldiers in Dubrave (that is, on Eagle Base, as they call it) at any given moment. The rest of them are on the field. Whatever is happening inside the complex surrounded with several layers of

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barbed wire is inaccessible to the eye of an ordinary man. For that reason it was strange but also interesting when at the beginning of March the U.S. Army Military Police "caught" several Dubrave boys on Eagle Base grounds. The children somehow crawled through the wire, as it transpired later, out of sheer curiosity to see what was in there.

Curiosity, however, is not advisable to the older. The villagers of Dubrave Gornje learned of this early in the year. The U.S. soldiers, representatives of a country in which private property is paramount, have almost created a conflict with their civilian surroundings by expanding the circle around their base into private fields and meadows. The villagers rebelled, municipal authorities met in sessions, journalists hurried over, representatives of the base came and.... Things soon calmed down because the villagers of Dubrave are not exactly stupid and they agreed to a compensation, with dignity, without qualms over whether the payment would be in dollars or in German marks. Speaking of dollars and marks, they have changed many things. Late last year, when it became clear after Dayton that the Americans would come, the people in this town were rubbing their hands together. It transpired, however, at least for the time being, that they counted their chickens before they hatched. Not only are the Americans not spending hundreds of thousands of dollars, but even the little that they do spend they do within the boundaries of Eagle Base, where they have everything they need (except brothels, perhaps, but not even this is certain). When they come in Tuzla they give an impression of exhausted soldiers in full combat gear, they move around in groups of at least six soldiers with automatic rifles ready to fire, and when they enter any of the coffeehouses (for example the one named Dalma in Tuzla), four of them are drinking inside and two keep guard outside.

"It appears that somebody filled their ears with stories that we are all mujahidin here!" one Tuzla resident comments with a smile for which it is not entirely clear whether it means mockery or perhaps something else.

Destroyed Roads

Even if we remove the thin varnish of humor from all the sadness and tragedy in this part of Bosnia-Herzegovina, it appears that the Dubrave base, at least judging by the claims of those in the know, will until further notice constitute a piece of the NATO pact, that is, America. Not even the most gullible ones believe that all this equipment, cash investments, construction work, infrastructure development, and so on were undertaken for a one-year stay. A well-known Tuzla businessman, whose company is well represented in deals with the Americans (For 350,000 German marks he leased them a part of a warehouse and a parking lot), says seriously: "They are not throwing money around. Whatever they invest in they will definitely not leave to 'the indigenous population' after only one year. It suffices to look at the construction work to argue this case and see what it is all about...." What bothers Tuzla and the Tuzla district, in the anticipation of the real answer, and what is also a growing nuisance is a vast number of Implementation Force [IFOR] vehicles that travel on the local roads. In only three months they destroyed the roads to such an extent that it is a real adventure to travel from Tuzla to Lukavac, Srebrenik, Gracanica, Zivinice, Banovici, or Kladanj—or be sure that one's vehicle will remain in one piece. It is said in casual commentaries that it appears each IFOR soldier has a vehicle.

Although none of the IFOR officials nor anyone from the bevy of organizations, institutions, and services of the civilian type that accompany it wishes to speak about it, it is not difficult to guess that NATO soldiers will nevertheless stay here a little longer than a year. The subject of speculation and guesswork is—how much longer. Those "in the know" claim this will be at least five or 10 years at the most. They even go as far as to "guarantee" the figure of 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers, naturally, Americans who would stay here to "consolidate" the future NATO base. Stories of this type are not necessarily groundless, especially if compared to the expert opinions that Dubrave airport has a strategic, technical, geographical, and other profile that gives it a cut above others in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is also not insignificant that it is very close to the separation lines with the Serbian entity and with the Russians, who have already settled down as if at home there.

Without Our Influence

Two aspects give a special meaning to the entire story about the Americans and IFOR in the debate between those who are IN FAVOR [preceding two words published in capital letters] and those who are AGAINST [preceding word published in capital letters] their prolonged stay: First, the source of earnings provided for a considerable number of people who are otherwise pestered by the lack of money and unemployment, and on the other hand, the political and security aspect.

In connection with the first aspect, it is not insignificant that an hourly wage of a manual laborer on the IFOR payroll is DM4, while an intellectual effort, especially translation, can yield anything up to DM10. In the present circumstances—such earnings equal an abstract notion for the ordinary people.

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On the other hand, the political and security aspect is reflected in the belief that, for as long as the Americans are here, nobody "from the other side" would dare to, God forbid, fire: The Americans would doubtlessly respond fiercely, which means that they are protecting and guarding us, too. Regardless of the extent to which such and similar opinions match the real and, in the majority of cases, invisible picture of what is happening in connection with Bosnia and inside Bosnia, it seems that Daytonization of these territories is greatly under way in a manner that we simply cannot influence. To see this, it again suffices to visit the area of Dubrave base. After being systematically searched, physically—with hands and a detector—by an IFOR soldier, a person is sent to a reception area from where, if he happens to be a journalist, he is escorted to the press service. He can only proceed further into the base accompanied and only with good reason, which is usually the arrival of a dignitary whose visit and stay is supposed to be covered professionally. Anything else is inadvisable and virtually impossible.

Neither Triumph nor Loss

Even when a person does spend a little time on Eagle Base, numerous questions arise. First of all, why do the Americans have so little time for tidying, washing, and personal hygiene? Then, why do they see in each visitor, even those with proper documentation, first somebody who merits suspicion and only afterward perhaps a human being who happens to be there professionally? And third, do the Americans—who in the absence of any better employment regularly throw improvised baseball parties in the middle of the base to make the time pass faster—know what numerous foreign reporters have figured out before their arrival, namely, that they will stay for such a long time that it would pay to do what the Soviet television stations did in December 1995 when they leased for big money more or less all the houses in the vicinity of Eagle Base, setting up camera scaffoldings and satellite equipment....

The Americans, of course, know this very well. That is why they are not angry, they are even smiling when they are being told that this entire area (Dubrave Gornje, Dubrave Donje, and the wider region) should from now on be called the United Dubrave of America. If, however, something is not clear, they can find numerous residents in this same Dubrave who will explain to them: "They used to say here that whenever we were in trouble it would be good to go to war with the Americans. If we lost we would become a new U.S. state. If we won, we would become America...."

We neither won nor lost the war this time; however, America has come. That is why the center of the territory in northeastern Bosnia where they are present is called the United Dubrave of America.

B-H: Holding POW's Risks Exclusion From Donor Conference

AU2903112496 Paris AFP in English 1107 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 29 (AFP)—Bosnia's three sides risk exclusion from next month's key donor conference if they fail to free their remaining prisoners of war, a spokesman for Bosnia's High Representative said Friday.

"We are thinking of excluding from the donor conference anyone who does not meet their obligations," said Colum Murphy, a spokesman for Carl Bildt, the High Representative in Bosnia.

Bosnia's Moslems, Croats and Serbs have recently come under international pressure to comply with a clause in the country's landmark peace deal to free all POWs, something that should have been done by January 19.

The former warring sides "are not supposed to carry out bi-lateral exchanges but to free all the prisoners that they hold," the spokesman said responding to a report Thursday that Serbs and Croats would swap their POWs.

According to the Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic ordered the release of "all Croatian prisoners of war" Thursday. At the same time, "all registered Serb POWs" will be freed by the Bosnian Croats and Croatia, according to SRNA. The agency did not say where, when or how many people would be freed.

Exclusion from next months' conference in Brussels, which will be attended by donor countries interested in contributing to reconstruction efforts in Bosnia, would be considered after the weekend, Murphy said.

More than a hundred prisoners were freed over a week ago by the mainly Moslem Bosnian government authorities and the Croats. On Friday, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said in Sarajevo that it had no "concrete information" on the releases announced by Karadzic.

According to the ICRC, 96 prisons are still held by the three sides in Bosnia. Of them 28 are held by the Bosnian Serbs, 28 by the Bosnian Moslems and at least 40 by the Croat authorities in Bosnia.

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B-H: Karadzic Decrees Release of Croat POW's

LD2803192096 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1852 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 28 Mar (SRNA)—Serb Republic President Dr. Radovan Karadzic today adopted a decision on the release of all POW's of Croatian nationality, that is, members of the Croat Defense Council [HVO] and Croatian Army.

A statement from the Serb Republic's press office says that Dr. Karadzic took the decision in accordance with the agreement between the foreign ministers of the Serb Republic and Russia, Aleksa Buha and Yevgeniy Primakov, and the agreement between the People's Assembly Speaker Momcilo Krajisnik and Kremimir Zubak, president of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

With the adoption of this decision, no POW of Croatian nationality will remain in prisons on the territory of the Serb Republic, with the exception of a few persons who have committed war crimes, the statement says.

At the same time, it is stressed, all registered POW's—soldiers of the Serb Republic army—will be released from prisons of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia and the Republic of Croatia.

The Serb Republic also invites representatives of the Muslim government to bilateral contacts in the next 48 hours in order to reach decisions on releasing all prisoners of Serb nationality, President Karadzic's statement says.

B-H: Krajisnik on Misinterpretation of Dayton Accord

LD2803220996 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1815 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 28 Mar (SRNA)—Momcilo Krajisnik, speaker of the People's Assembly of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic, said today that all attempts at post-factum political instrumentalization [naknadna politicka instrumentalizacija] and abuse of the fundamental provisions of the Dayton agreement are a Sisyphean task.

"A section of the international community and the Muslims have interpreted Dayton as a transitional phase on the way to the establishment of a monolithic, unitary Bosnia-Herzegovina, but the first three months have shown that such an approach leads to direct violation of the peace agreement," Krajisnik said in an interview to Serb Republic Radio.

The implementation of the military part of the agreement, he said, is a pleasant surprise, while the application of the civilian part has been hampered by its complexity and by attempts at subsequent political instrumentalization.

"IFOR [Implementation Force] has shown surprising flexibility, and we have good relations with them and understanding for some of their shortcomings. As far as the civilian mediators are concerned, we consider that the parties to negotiations on the application of these provisions should be the Serb Republic and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina on an equal footing."

The Serb parliament speaker expressed dissatisfaction with the international community's lenient attitude toward the Muslim side with regard to the question of the release of POW's, and said that preparations are being completed for the exchange of prisoners with the Croat side.

Krajisnik also noted the attempts by "certain international factors" to introduce mechanisms to limit the sovereignty of the Serb Republic within the election procedure and described the proposals to deny the voter the right to cast his vote "wherever he chooses" as undemocratic.

"The Serb Republic is ready for the elections at any time, as confirmation of our basic principles, which include first and foremost a state, freedom, and democracy," Krajisnik stressed, noting that party consensus should be reached on the protection of basic national interests.

"The preelection political campaign should not bring into question the state and freedom, because nowhere in the world are the state and freedom the subject of political contests. We have to take into account those elements of national politics on which the nation's survival depends."

Krajisnik announced that a session of the People's Assembly will be held on 1 April, which will in part be formal but will also be devoted to the coordination of the Serb Republic constitution with the provisions of the Dayton agreement, on which the constitutional commission is already working.

B-H: RS's Buha, Ostojic Discuss Situation With UK Envoy

LD2703181996 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1535 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sarajevo, 27 Mar (SRNA)—Velibor Ostojic, deputy prime minister of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic [RS], and Aleksa Buha, foreign minister, had talks in Pale today with Brian Hopkins, the British ambassador in Sarajevo, on the current political situation, the release of POW's, and the forthcoming elections.

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The British ambassador said after the meeting that he had come to talk with RS government representatives on the current situation and the future of peace in the union of the RS and the Muslim-Croat federation.

"We support and accept the Dayton agreement as a whole, and this means the Serb Republic and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation," Hopkins said, and added that, for his country, the most important thing is the future of a country which includes the RS and the Muslim-Croat federation. [passage omitted]

Buha warned Ambassador Hopkins about the problems which might arise in the runup to the elections, or rather the interim electoral regulations which envisage that people should vote in the municipalities in which they lived before the war.

"If these regulations remain in force we would have to take into consideration new migrations of people. Over 500,000 Serbs would set out for the federation, and Muslims and Croats for the RS [as received]. This is impossible in practical terms and would lead to large and insurmountable problems," the foreign minister said.

At the meeting there was also discussion of the efforts by part of the international community, especially the United States, to organize new deliveries of weapons to the Muslims and Croats, while at the same time disarmament negotiations are going on in Vienna. Buha said this contravenes the provisions of the Dayton agreement.

"We requested that Mr. Hopkins do everything to see that we do not get into a situation in which we are doing two contradictory jobs," Buha said. [passage omitted]

B-H: Serbs Detain Three Bosniaks for Laying Mines

AU2803132696 Paris AFP in English 1231 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 28 (AFP)—Three Bosnian Muslims recently arrested by the Bosnian Serbs were allegedly laying an anti-personnel mine across a road just outside Sarajevo, the United Nations said Thursday.

The allegations, made by the Serbs but lent credence by the spokesman for the UN police (IPTF), Alexander Ivanko, adjusts suggestions he made on Wednesday that the three men were doing nothing more than playing football at the time of their arrest.

"It seems that initially there is enough information to suggest they may have been involved in some activities outside of playing football," Ivanko said.

"One of them was allegedly in the process of attaching a string to an anti-personnel mine lying across the road. The other two allegedly acted as guards," he said.

Ivanko said the IPTF deputy commisioner, US cop Bob Wasserman, had visited the Serb police to inspect the evidence. "He...is content with the evidence that has been provided. We have the full support of the Bosnian Serb authorities in monitoring this case," Ivanko said.

The three were arrested last Friday on a hill overlooking the capital. An important road connecting Serb-held areas runs along the height. All have been charged by the Serbs with "with attempted terrorism. The younger two as accomplices," Ivanko said. The trio were aged 25, 18 and 17 years.

One of the men, the spokesman named as Jasmin Slivo who fought in a renegade band of Bosnian defenders of Sarajevo during the war. He was to be investigated by the Serbs for "war-crimes" Ivanko said.

B-H: Serb-Muslim Tension Flares in Sarajevo; IFOR Deploys

AU2903160896 Paris AFP in English 1551 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SARAJEVO, March 29 (AFP)—Tension flared Friday between Serbs and Moslems on the boundary line separating the two former foes above the capital Sarajevo.

Several shots were fired at Bosnian Moslem police and hand grenades were thrown when the police attempted to arrest four Serb youths they said had been looting houses.

There were no major injuries, although one Bosnian policeman had a slight flesh wound to his ear from one of the explosions. Italian NATO troops who patrol the Grbavica neighbour which runs up to the line separating the two sides, were quickly deployed on the scene.

It is the first serious incident involving the two sides since Serbs relinquished large areas of the city to the mainly-Moslem-Croat federation including the Grbavica area.

B-H: New Mass Grave Discovered Near Konjic

AU2803180796 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New mass graves of civilians from eastern Herzegovina and members of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, who were liquidated after being taken prisoner, are being discovered day by day in the general region of Borak and Borak Lake at the foot of Velez Mountain, which joined the Bosnia-Herzegovina

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Federation a few days ago. One of such graves was discovered in the region of [words indistinct] Konjic yesterday. Halil Sestak has the details:

[Sestak] After the mass grave was found in the Boracka Draga region near Konjic yesterday, containing the bodies of Asim Maric, Hasan Maric, [name indistinct], Halil Mastric, Enes Mastric, [name indistinct], and Muhamed Hasovic, fighters of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina Army's 4th Corps who were liquidated after being taken prisoner by Serb formations in 1994, the proof of new massacre sites has been found. Thus, the respective bodies' teams have gone out into the field again, because [words indistinct] new mass graves in the region of [Purovo], near Borak Lake, have been [word indistinct]. [passage omitted]

B-H: Central Bosnian Canton Constituted in Travnik

AU2803170696 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Immediately before the beginning of our newscast, we received (?encouraging) news from Travnik: The Central Bosnian Canton was constituted, at a session that is still under way. Here is Refija Kulasin reporting from Travnik:

[Kulasin] Exactly as was agreed by the cantonal coordination committee for implementing the Constitution of the Federation this morning, [words indistinct] of the Central Bosnian Canton opened in Travnik exactly at 1200 today under the chairmanship of Ante Valenta. The session was attended by many guests: Let me point out Mr. [name indistinct], mediator of the Federation of Bosia-Herzegovina, Federation President Kresimir Zubak, and Deputy Federal Prime Minister Drago Bilandzija.

The session is still under way. Only two points of the agenda are left. However, on the basis of what has been done so far, we can state with satisfaction that the constitution of the Central Bosnian Canton was successfully concluded in Travnik today.

The first to address the guests was Mr. (?Pilin), who said that it was a great honor for him to be able to speak at this assembly, and pointed out that this was an historic step, with which one of the greatest foundation stones of the Federation had been placed. After that, Mr. Kresimir Zubak took the floor, and said that it was very important for the Federation to [word indistinct] authorities on the very regions where the fiercest clashes between Croat and Bosniak peoples took place, so we can bring back confidence and build a happier future.

At the proposal presented by Chairman Valenta, the agenda was adopted without any remarks. The first point of the agenda was discussion of the report by the Cantonal Coordination Committee for the Implementation of the Constitution of the Federation in this canton regarding activities carried out on preparing the session of the Central Bosnian Cantonal Assembly. Ante Valenta then read out the names of the assembly deputies, after which a three-member commission for mandate (?verification) was elected. Following a short recess, the commission submitted a report, so 49 mandates were verified apart from one from Novi Travnik and five from Bugojno, where deputies have still not been appointed. After that, the deputies took solemn oaths.

Further on in the session, the constitution of the Central Bosnian Canton was adopted. After the text was completely coordinated, apart from some technical shortcomings that the working group will [word indistinct] within 10 days and present a report to the assembly, the constitution was adopted. The only uncoordinated point is the canton center, which will be agreed on afterwards. The assembly rules of procedure were adopted with one abstention. (Midhad Karadzic) of the Party of Democratic Action, and born in Jajce, was elected chairman of the canton, and Jozo Boro from Kiseljak, representative of the Croatian Democratic Community, was elected his deputy.

The election of the president and deputy president of the Central Bosnia Canton naturally attracted the greatest interest. Ivan Palic, a lawyer from Gornji Vakuf, was elected president and Dr. Haris Bjenjad from Travnik was elected deputy. [passage omitted]

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Croatia: Steiner Urges Linking Aid to Dayton Implementation

AU2803180896 Paris AFP in English 1730 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 28 (AFP)—A top international aid coordinator said Thursday that aid to the shaky Moslem-Croat Federation should be linked to progress on the implementation of the Dayton agreement, after its U.S. sponsors voiced doubts about its durability.

Michael Steiner, deputy to High Representative for Bosnia Carl Bildt, said the time had come for real cooperation on the ground if aid payments from an already reluctant international community were not to be permanently affected.

"The Federation is not in good shape," Steiner said after a meeting here with Croatian President Franjo Tudjman. "My assessment is that there are problems on both sides of the federation partners," he added.

"The point is that we have really enough agreements. What we need is the implementation of the agreements," he said, adding that Tudjman had "fully supported" his approach.

Progress on strengthening the uneasy alliance between Bosnia's Moslems and Croats has been slow as old suspicions have resurfaced in the wake of the Dayton agreement.

Particularly hit has been the forming of cantons, agreement on a new flag, and lack of discipline in the new joint police force as the country prepares the ground for free elections.

"Everybody must now work together," Steiner said, adding: "I feel the international community is hardly motivated to spend money in the federation."

NATO's U.S. commander in Europe, General George Joulwan and U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry have both warned that cracks in the federation is their biggest concern in Bosnia.

NATO has reported checkpoints, observation posts and bunkers springing up in many areas within the federation, not just along the boundary line with Bosnian Serb-controlled territory.

Forged in 1994 under intense U.S. diplomatic pressure, the federation brought together Bosnia's Moslems and Croats in a shotgun marriage that ended their bitter year-long war but never resolved their differences.

Croatia: UN Envoy Pledges Support to Bosnia Federation

LD2903092796 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 0800 GMT 29 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The success of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation is of strategic interest to Croatia, and the Croatian Government remains fully committed to the implementation of the Washington Agreements. Croatia will continue to bring its influence to bear on Bosnian Croat leaders in order to strengthen the importance of the federation, and it will seek ways to ensure that Bosnian Croats are fairly represented in the political, military, economic, and cultural life of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mario Nobilo, the Croatian ambassador to the United Nations, said on the occasion of the second anniversary of the Croat-Bosniak federation.

Nobilo also said the federation and its links with Croatia will establish a long-term balance of forces in the region. The federation could prevent a shift of Bosnia-Herzegovina toward radical ideologies which might threaten lasting peace and security not only in the region but also in Europe, Nobilo said.

Croatia: Bildt, Slavonia Serbs Hold Talks in Erdut

AU2803155796 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 28 Mar 96

[Report by Bogdan Prkman from Vukovar]

[FBIS Translated Text] UN high representative Carl Bildt is visiting the Srem-Baranja region. Bogdan Prkman reports from Vukovar:

[Prkman] I am here on a short visit to acquaint myself with the general situation. I have been encouraged with the positive changes. This was stated by Carl Bildt after his talks with Milan Milanovic in Erdut.

Bildt stressed that in implementing the multiethnic model it is very important that this region be inhabited by Serbs, Croats, and others. This is also important for general stabilization and peace in Europe.

Describing the talks with Milan Milanovic, head of Serb negotiators, as pleasant, the high UN representative said that he and Mr. Milanovic had agreed on the importance of respecting the Erdut Agreement.

After visiting Erdut, Bildt went to Borovo where he held talks with Borislav Drzajic, chairman of the Executive Council of the Srem-Baranja region. After the talks, in reply to a journalist's question on when the Serbs expelled from Krajina would be able to return to their homes in the spirit of the Dayton agreement, Bildt expressed the hope that this would

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happen as soon as possible. He also stressed that the international community considers this the basic principle for establishing peace.

According to the universal principle on return, Croats will be returning to Vukovar and Serbs to Knin or western Slavonia, the Swedish diplomat said. In reply to the comment that Croatian authorities are preventing the Serbs' return, Bildt said that different authorities cooperate differently with the international community. Croatia should respect human rights, as this is, among other things, the condition for acceptance in European institutions.

As part of his visit to the Srem-Baranja region, Carl Bildt also held talks with Slavko Dokmanovic, president of the Council of the Srem-Baranja region, and General Dusan Loncar, commander of the Slavonia-Baranja Corps.

Croatia: Jews Hail U.S. Stance on Nazi Camp Reburial Plan

AU2903081996 Paris AFP in English 2359 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 28 (AFP)—Croatia's Jewish community Thursday hailed a US protest at a plan by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman to exhume the remains of Croatian fascist soldiers and bury them along with Jews and Serbs they killed during World War II.

"We salute Washington's reaction to this plan of the Croatian authorities, for it is inconceivable that victims and their killers should be buried side by side," Ognjen Kraus, head of the Jewish community here, commented.

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Wednesday he would send a letter of protest to Tudjman concerning the proposed reburial at Jasenovac, site of a Nazi-backed death camp.

"It sounds to me as if it's an attempt to color the past in a way that is really inconsistent with what he should be doing," Christopher told US lawmakers at a congressional hearing.

"We will make a protest to President Tudjman," Christopher said.

Under the plan unveiled in January and reported in The WASHINGTON POST earlier this month, Jasenovac would become the only place in Europe where victims of a World War II concentration camp are interred with soldiers of the army that rounded them up and killed them.

Kraus said the project shows a lack of respect for the victims of the Holocaust and of World War II.

Tudjman's office refused to comment on the controversy.

The Croatian president already angered his country's Jews when on a visit to Argentina last year he decorated the former commandant of Jasenovac, Ivo Rojnica.

"We have twice sent letters of protest to Tudjman and other Croatian authorities, but never had a reply," Kraus said.

Croatia: Farmers Stage Protest Against Food Imports

LD2803203296 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2022 GMT 28 Mar 96

[Article by Savan Tomasevic]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 28 (TANJUG)—"Time has come for farmers to raise their heads," has said Josip Pankretic, deputy of the parliamentary opposition Croatian Peasants Party (HSS).

Pankretic, prominent farmer himself who became popular among Croatia's farmers for defending their interests, on Wednesday drove his tractor to join one of the many columns of Croatian farmers who were protesting against uncontrolled food imports.

Croatian farmers staged this protest, first since "young democracy" was instituted in the seceded former Yugoslav republic in 1991, saying that the government policy had brought them into so far the most difficult position.

Croatian farmers are angered most at uncontrolled farm produce imports and unparalelled smuggling of food. On their banner at the protest read "While mafia pays no duties for imports... the villages and plowland are devastated."

By evading customs duties and taxes, the smugglers make it impossible for farmers to sell their products on the home market.

Leaders of the protesting farmers said this was just "a warning" and in a month's time, unless something serious is undertaken, they might completely block border crossings and principal trunk communications. They said they would find ways as to how to fight for their rights and interests.

The "warning protest" rallied a large number of farmers throughout Croatia, from Dalmatian Adriatic coast to the eastern Croatian Slavonia.

Farmer protesters were moving in well-organized columns towards seven border crossings (with Bosnia

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and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Hungary) and along about 28 major roads.

Traffic was this time blocked along one lane, but farmers warned that next time a massive "peasants' uprising" would be directed against the government policy of impoverishing the rural countryside.

Support to farmers was lavishly extended also by Croatian opposition parties, the MPs of which had joined farmers' columns, supporting in this way the protest and struggle for a better position of Croatian farmers.

Croatia: Opposition Leader Says President 'Too Powerful'

AU2903103296 Vienna DIE PRESSE in German 29 Mar 96 p 4

[Interview with Zdravko Tomac, president of the Zagreb city parliament and "leading figure of the Croatian opposition," by Erich Rathfelder; place and date not given: "The Ruling Party and Tudjman Believe That They Are Identical With the Nation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Rathfelder] Mr. Tomac, will you be the next Croatian president?

[Tomac] I do not know. But if so, the president's position would no longer be as important as it is now because I am in favor of reducing the president's power and strengthening parliament.

[Rathfelder] President Tudjman is suffering from prostate cancer, and the second most powerful man in the state, Defense Minister Susak, recently underwent lung surgery. In Zagreb itself, the opposition won over 60 percent of the votes during the fall 1995 elections. However, Tudjman does not want to accept a mayor from the opposition. What do you want to do now?

[Tomac] We proposed a candidate for the mayor's office three times, but President Tudjman always rejected them. In spite of this obstructionism on the part of the president, I have addressed a letter to the Council of Europe, asking for Croatia's acceptance, which will also happen. The Council of Europe has called on Tudjman to observe legal and democratic procedures. Since the president signed a document promising that he will observe the recommendations by the Council of Europe, the situation in Zagreb should soon be settled.

[Rathfelder] What form could the solution take?

[Tomac] Tudjman must either accept our proposals or he must dissolve parliament. Then he could install a governor to rule in a dictatorial manner for two months. After that period, however, new elections would have to be held.

[Rathfelder] What are the reasons for Tudjman's behavior?

[Tomac] The ruling party and Tudjman believe that they are identical with the nation. They believe that a loss of power would destabilize Croatia. A total of 50 percent of Croatia's industrial potential is concentrated in Zagreb. If they lost power there, it would be difficult for them to maintain control of the entire state. At least, this is what they believe.

[Rathfelder] This is a totalitarian idea. Why did you call on the Council of Europe to accept Croatia in view of these polices?

[Tomac] This has nothing to do with day-to-day politics. As in all postcommunist societies, the democratization process is only making slow process in Croatia. Croatia's integration in the European institutions can accelerate the process of democratization.

[Rathfelder] Really? How?

[Tomac] Europe and the United States only want to accept a stable Croatia. They tend to value stability higher than democracy. For this reason, the opposition must show that, if it were in power, Croatia would remain stable, in spite of the planned democratization. We have not accepted any radical movements in the opposition alliance. The ruling party is increasingly proving to be a factor of insecurity. The president is too powerful.

[Rathfelder] You need a peaceful environment for democratization. What do you want to do with regard to Serbia or Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Tomac] There will be no peace in this region if Bosnia-Herzegovina is divided. In the Croatian-Muslim Federation, the coexistence of Croatians and Muslims must first be made possible. There is no alternative to a multiethnic, multireligious, and democratic Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Croatia: New Military Appointments Assessed

AU2803171796 Zagreb VECERNJI LIST in Serbo-Croatian 15 Mar 96 p 2

[Commentary by Frane Plancic: "Generals of Peace of the Croatian Army"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The president's decision, which was announced yesterday, on promotions and appointments in the leadership of the Croatian Army, and on the retirement of four high officers, marked the end of the war cycle in the development of the entire Croatian Armed Forces, and in particular of the Croatian Army.

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At the same time it offered an insight into the organizational, territorial, and functional changes which have taken the Croatian Army into its peacetime development, and its candidacy for NATO.

Despite the speculations that it would not be possible to carry out the transformation of the Army into a peacetime organization without political commotion in the Army leadership, there have been no signs of that whatsoever. Defense Minister Gojko Susak got General Kresimir Cosic for his deputy (after Josip Juras for civilian questions). His scope of work is by no means political—technological development is the moving force of every modern army. And Gen. Pavle Miljavac became the deputy to the Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Army, Gen. Zvonimir Cervenko. There is no trace of unprofessional decisions here. On the contrary, it can be concluded that Gen. Miljavac was given a role in the command of ground forces, in accordance with his persistent advocating of the concept of modernized civil defense as the traditional Croatian form of defense organization.

Besides all that, it should be reminded that it is Minister Susak and Gen. Cervenko who are the strongest supporters of the president's concept of modernizing the Croatian Army, which these decisions deal with.

After all, the General Staff as a whole has been formed to suit peacetime conditions, apparently after the model of the joint General Staff of the U.S. Army, so that Gen. Cervenko got two deputies. Admiral Kajic is to return from Split to Zagreb, as the assistant to the chief of the General Staff of the Navy, and Gen. Agotic is leaving Maksimirska Street to become the assistant commander for air force and antiaircraft defense. Both of them are well known as superbly technically educated experts with combat experience, and with entirely indiscernible political aspirations.

The same refers to the newly appointed commanders of the Croatian Navy and the Croatian Air Force and Antiaircraft Defense, Adm. Vid Stipetic and Gen. Jozo Culetic. Both of them have been promoted (in their ranks and their posts) according to military logic—until now they have been commanders of the general staffs of those two branches of the Croatian Army. The other promotions and appointments should also be viewed in that way. The new position of Gen. Ante Gotovina as the inspector general of the Croatian Army is more responsible in the new organization of the Croatian Army than what one usually believes it to be. In small armies, for example in the Austrian Army, but also in the German Army, the inspector general is the main person. That also goes for bringing the Croatian Army University "into order" through the appointment of Gen. Josip Lucic as its head; the same can be said about the appointment of Gen. Miljenko Crnjac to the post of the head of the Army cabinet in the Office of the President of the Republic.

The president's decision also offers full insight into the territorial deployment of the Croatian Army and the command headquarters of the corps districts. Command headquarters are in Djakovo, Varazdin, Karlovac, Pazin, Knin, and Ston. They cover the entire territory of Croatia with a proper net, particularly the geographically sensitive points, and the corps districts themselves are geographically and economically quite independent units. That does not mean that every district will finance "its own" brigade or division—because in that way Croatian Army units stationed in Knin would "starve," and those in Varazdin would live "in luxury."

The reasons should be sought in the military profession and in the new defense tasks. But also in personnel. The example of the youngest general of the Croatian Army, Damir Krsticevic, is characteristic—he has not been "logically" moved from the post of 4th Brigade commander to the post of the commander of the Corps District Ston, but instead he has been made the commander of the Pazin district, where work has to be done starting from the very foundations. Who can do that better than a young and ambitious general? And it is logical that Gen. Mile Petkovic will come from Osijek to Ston—he practically commanded that area while he was in the HVO [Croatian Defense Council].

All commanders of corps districts have the rank of major general, the same as the commanders of branches have, and that is understandable. Except in the case of the Corps District of Djakovo, where the firmly anchored Djuro Decak, with the rank of colonel general, will remain.

Besides all that, the moving of command headquarters of corps districts from big cities like Split and Osijek to small places is a special topic. The reason for moving the army from big cities should in the first place be seen in the conception of the armed forces as an "inconspicuous" component of the everyday and of the state life of one nation. And then also for operational reasons in the functioning of the army.

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The conception of the peacetime development of the Croatian Army, judging by the published curriculum vitae's and the announcement issued at the session of the VONS [expansion unknown], lies in the generation of high officers around 40 years of age. In accordance with that and with some other criteria, Gen. Anton Tus, the first commander of the General Staff and a distinguished creator of the strength of the Croatian Army, and Adm. Sveto Letica, founder and creator of the Croatian Navy, are retiring.

All these changes are taking place in the conditions of demobilization in Croatia, of an uncertain end of the war in Bosnia—Herzegovina, and of a diplomatic battle for admitting Croatia into an allied relationship with NATO.

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FYROM: Prime Minister Opposes Early Elections

AU2703133896 Skopje NOVA MAKEDONIJA in Macedonian 23 Mar 96 pp 16-17

[Interview with Macedonian Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski by Erol Rizaov and Georgi Barbarovski; place and date not given: "We Did Not Cheat the Voters"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [NOVA MAKEDONIJA] It is a whole month since the new government was appointed. What is your current impression about the way it has begun to function, considering the noisy debate about the government reshuffle?

[Crvenkovski] The period of less than 30 days since the election of the government is too short to draw a complete picture. The prolonged Assembly procedure regarding the government reorganization has created a vacuum in the work of the executive power. In the past few days, we have been working hard to make good the shortcomings. In any case, we can now conclude that some assertions that were made, or imposed, among the public that the work of the legislative and executive power would be fully blocked after the known epilogue in the Assembly and that there would be great political instability have proved to be unfounded.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] Now that the government has been changed and the Liberals no longer participate, will the government stick to its strategic determinations or will it create new ones?

[Crvenkovski] I think that the answer to this question was dealt with best in the draft for the reconstruction of the government. The strategic determinations remain the same, while the activities will have to be intensified. In fact, even the previous participation of the Liberal Party [LP] was not of a degree and nature to have great influence on strategic determinations. Their possible future participation will not change anything in this either.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] After the dissolution of the Alliance for Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM], you assumed full responsibility for the overall situation in the state. This was considered a brave step but also as the wrong assessment about the consequences that could arise after such immense political changes and risky moves, as you yourself called them. Beside the courage that you demonstrated, are there any more far-reaching analyses about possible further political turmoil? In what ways will the government engage itself anew in this direction?

[Crvenkovski] If you allow me, I would like to identify the theses that are hiding behind your question:

1. The SDSM [Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia] and I are to blame for the dissolution of the Alliance for Macedonia.

2. You can say that it is a brave step but with the wrong assessment about the consequences (implying that you are familiar with the consequences).

3. Political turmoil is the inevitable consequence of the reconstruction of the government.

4. Our overall approach can be assessed as radical determinations.

I must say that none of these theses can be submitted to objective criticism.

Let us recall: The first serious blow to the Alliance for Macedonia was when the LP did not give its vote for the election of the government. Later a thesis on ministers-experts was promoted. The fact that the LP stuck to this principle, even after it had been publicly called on to reexamine its view, marked the end of cooperation. I would not describe this epilogue as either brave or radical, but as principled and in accordance with both the written and unwritten rules of parliamentarian democracy. The other three coalition partners decided to continue their cooperation and the draft of the new government list, as you know, received 83 votes in the Assembly, which is much more than it had previously.

On your pages, and in the media in general, I could often read such assertions as "the biggest danger for democratic processes in Macedonia is the absence of a strong parliamentary opposition." In this new situation, the Macedonian parliament has gained a strong and, I hope, a constructive opposition with the LP parliamentary group, which can represent a strong impetus for the development of democracy in Macedonia.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] To say that you accept political responsibility can be considered as declarative, even demagogic, unless you lay down publicly the concrete results that this government is expecting to achieve in the future period. Beside mentioning that the government has been working hard, can you tell us something about the specific steps that you are planning to make?

[Crvenkovski] I fully agree with you that it is demagogic to say that the government will be hard working without naming the results it expects. I am very sorry that you have read only the last few lines of my speech on the occasion of the reconstruction of the government. In it I set out exactly the specific issues and priorities of the government in the future period in different spheres, like foreign policy, reforms in the economic and political system, social welfare, reforms in the administration,

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struggle against crime, and so on. Considering the fact that my speech was published in full in NOVA MAKEDONIJA, I find it pointless to repeat the stated views that have been read by the audience.

We Are Not Evading Political Responsibility

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] Is the government prepared, for instance, to assume political responsibility for a continual fall in industrial output and GNP, as well as for the fall in the standard of living, which will increase social tensions and cause more factories be closed than opened? Or, if in 1996 all these indicators are negative, as they have been so far, are you and your cabinet prepared to resign?

[Crvenkovski] The question of political responsibility is ever present. It can come into effect through parliamentary procedure or resignation of the government. Anyone who is not prepared to face this fact is not ready to be involved in politics.

I am prepared to accept political responsibility if particular political trends in important spheres of life are proven to be the result of the government's wrong policy or where it would have been possible to have had much better results, for reasons justified or unjustified, the government did not act.

In other words, if industrial output or GNP falls as a result of our wrongdoing, it is quite clear that we will be responsible for this.

However, if negative trends occur for reasons that are beyond our control, such as the sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, the lost markets because of changed military and political situation, the blockade on our southern border with Greece and so on, then the question of responsibility will be only of a psychological nature and its aim will be to justify some frustrations. It must not be overlooked that we are in the midst of the biggest reforms in the economic system for which there is undoubtedly a special social price to be paid.

In any case, we started the year 1996 in a more relaxed way, without sanctions and blockades, and I personally believe that this is the first year in which we will be able to objectively assess the effects of the government on the economic and social plan, on the plan for industrial output and GNP.

The first few months of the year have been encouraging. After many years of a constant negative trend, in January and February we recorded an increase in industrial output by 8.7 percent. I believe that this trend will continue in the future, and therefore 1996 is definitely a turning point and the bottom of the economic crisis is behind us.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] According to some indicators, this government is neither political nor expert. There are various different types of people in it, while university professors, who have their obligations at the university, dominate. How much can this affect your determination to have a government that will work as a team, and can we expect theoretical rather than practical solutions?

[Crvenkovski] To be honest, I am surprised how you understand "political" and "expert" government. It is true that much depends on the level of education and professional titles of the members of government, but above all whether this government and the support that it has been given is backed by defined political parties that have obtained legitimacy in regular elections and are politically responsible for the functioning of the government. By contrast, there is usually a broad compromise in parliament and an "expert" or "professional" government with a transitory role is elected.

Starting from this principle of parliamentary democracy, the present government of the Republic of Macedonia is a political government, and there is no question about that. It is quite clear which political parties support it and which of the ministers is on which list. The fact that a large number of Assembly deputies are doctors of science cannot be a handicap, but on the contrary, is an advantage. It is normal, if we really believe that the top achievements of science must be placed in the service of the development of the state.

Political Bluffing of Opposition

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] Fears have been expressed that, with the aim of proving at all costs that your moves are positive, you and your cabinet will completely stop the democratic processes in the state. Some even say that most of the democratic institutions will be under government control, from the media to the judicial system, including all citizens and nongovernment organizations. Are you worried about these warnings and how realistic are they?

[Crvenkovski] I am not worried at all because all these indications are false and unrealistic. The system of parliamentary democracy is different from the one that we abandoned a few years ago simply because it does not depend on somebody's good will or intention concerning the use or abuse of power, and there are incorporated mechanisms of control and responsibility.

I must say that it is absurd to come out with such contentions just at the time when expressions of appreciation of the development of democratic processes are arriving from different parts of the world and when our state is cited as a positive example in the whole region.

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It is also difficult to understand the contention that now that the Liberals have left the government democracy will be stopped and political instability will follow. If a sizeable parliamentary opposition leads to endangering democratic processes, then we come to an absurd conclusion, that is, that the biggest achievement of democracy is if opposition does not exist at all.

It is clear that this assessment is neither realistic nor objective, but the ordinary political bluffing of the opposition, which is waging a battle for self-promotion.

Now that you have mentioned the media, I would like to say the following: In countries with longer democratic traditions there is an informal division among independent, pro-opposition, and progovernment media. In Macedonia today, there are opposition and independent media, but neither by declaration nor by content is there any progovernment media.

I had several opportunities to read or hear in public that NOVA MAKEDONIJA is under the control of the government, or at least that it is that way inclined. Perhaps the best denial of this is the fact that we are having this talk today.

Judging by your questions, some who have ill intentions can conclude that your questions were selected with a special tendency.

However, the essential thing that I would like to emphasize now is that this government has a clearly defined view regarding the media. Our view and plea is that they must have full freedom in their editorial policy, that they must reflect the overall democratic processes in the state and represent one of the fundamental elements in the development of democracy. Actually, this is one of the basic principles of the government, as well as of the SDSM.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] In resigning as Assembly chairman, Stojan Andov said the way that you went about the election of the new government and its election in parliament amounted to the unilateral breakup of the election coalition, the Alliance for Macedonia, contrary to the will of the voters who voted for the candidates of the Alliance. He also made some remarks about violation of constitutional principles. When you were preparing your moves, did you consider that the voters for the Alliance might feel they had been cheated, that is, what is your comment on these remarks?

[Crvenkovski] In one of my previous answers, I said who damaged the Alliance for Macedonia and when, and thus the assertion about the unilateral split is not based on the facts.

At the last elections, the citizens voted for an election program and for the people for whom they believed could accomplish it. I am convinced that time will show that this government reshuffle will make it possible to achieve the Alliance platform goals more efficiently and responsibly.

What would really have cheated the voters would have been if we had continued with abuse of the real principles of parliamentary democracy and had continued this artificial situation because of unclear and misty interests, and if we had endangered the realization of the election program because of some [disputes in the] mutual background.

The problems will not get any smaller or bigger if you proceed with them; they can only get bigger, and sometimes impossible to solve. Concerning the constitutional aspect of the government reorganization, the situation is quite clear. Article 94 of the Constitution is crystal clear. The attempts to make constitutional interpretations are nothing but political. In fact, constitutional dilemmas are not solved in political discourse, but in the Constitutional Court. As far as I know, no such initiative has been submitted.

Period Marked by President Gligorov

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] There are persistent rumors that the position of the state president has been changed. The opposition claims that the position of the prime minister and government in relation to the head of the state has been revised. In your speech on the new government, you said that none of you has such credit as to protect President Gligorov. However, the impression was that you did not explain why you did not abide by the appeal of the state president.

[Crvenkovski] The position of and relationship between institutions of the system are clearly defined by the Constitution and are not the subject of anybody's personal will. So, we cannot talk about any changes in the position of the president or the government.

As far as the appeal of the president is concerned, and knowing him personally, I am convinced that his intention was not—as some tried to interpret—that he acted as an arbiter out of his own interests. Motivated by his sense of responsibility for the overall situation in the state, President Gligorov called on both political parties to try to reexamine their views. The SDSM did so. We made and examined all analyses and arguments, and we adopted some views that were publicly presented. In this case, the SDSM proved to be a real political subject that is prepared to make big decisions and assume full responsibility.

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[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] Prime Minister, you have publicly asked to refrain from defending President Gligorov and you promised that your mutual loyalty will continue also in the future not because of any calculations or interests but because you both fully coincide with the interests of the people. Is your statement declarative or is this your real view about the importance of the role of the president, Kiro Gligorov?

[Crvenkovski] I stated this sincerely, first of all as a man, and only then as president of the SDSM and prime minister. As Macedonia's prime minister in the past three and a half years, it is normal for me to be one of those who know best all the difficulties and temptations that Macedonia has been obliged to go through. The fact that Macedonia is today independent and internationally recognized, as an example of how democracy is to be achieved, as well as for its political and economic reforms and interethnic tolerance, is mostly owed to President Gligorov and his ability to find the real balance between visions and reality.

Usually, the real value of great historical events can only be viewed and assessed later from a historical distance. I am convinced that this period will be assessed as one of the most luminous in the history of the Macedonian people. It is exactly President Gligorov who has laid his mark on this period.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] In this context, there are many questions on whether you had the necessary consultations with the president when you were proposing the new government.

[Crvenkovski] I had a number of meetings with the president, and I informed him about possible solutions concerning the new government.

This question is overemphasized and some speculation was aimed at disturbing the good cooperation between the president and the government of the Republic of Macedonia.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] After the assassination attempt against the president, the former minister responsible for the police offered his resignation, which you did not accept, explaining that you wanted to give him the chance to be more engaged in the investigation. You have now entrusted him with another department before briefing the public opinion about the results of the investigation.

[Crvenkovski] With the government reshuffle, there was the need for new personnel. I started from the assumption that every person must be placed in the place where he can give the maximum. I believe that new Interior Minister Cokrevski will continue, with full responsibility and authority, with all the initiated activities, and I would like to emphasize here the investigation into the assassination attempt. I need not mention the importance of its positive outcome for the whole state.

Ministers Are Political Personalities

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] It is quite normal for the ministers to make statement about their own sectors. However, it has been noted that some ministers are displaying wider political views and interpretations.

Do the ministers have responsibility for their public statements and views that are sometimes contrary to the government's publicly declared views, and even contrary to your own?

[Crvenkovski] Nobody can be exempted from responsibility for public statements and personal actions. This is even more so when it has to do with high-ranking state officials, that is ministers of the Republic of Macedonia.

The mechanisms of responsibility head toward the prime minister, toward the parliament, and what is even more important, to public judgment.

Nevertheless, we must equally not forget that the ministers are political personalities, that they belong to different parties, and furthermore, they are persons with their own integrity and dignity.

In my opinion, it would be fatal for democratic processes in Macedonia if we legalized rules of behavior by which the people would lose their identity, and if we insisted on the ministers being transformed into machines which would simply mean that they were repeating the views of the prime minister. It is also illogical to have a situation in which everybody in the state can publicly speak about the situation in the state and expect the ministers to speak only about the narrow spheres for which they are directly responsible.

Of course, the proper measure for everything must be found, and for that, experience is needed as well as democratic practice, which, unfortunately, does not have a long tradition with us.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] You said that with the new government you are expecting a stronger struggle against crime, bribery, and corruption. However, this struggle has not started yet, and the citizens of Macedonia are worried by a series of crimes and violent acts that are unprecedented for this region. They feel generally insecure, and the inefficiency of the investigations contributes to this general atmosphere. Public opinion expects a rapid reaction to protect their lives and property. What will you undertake in this sector?

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[Crvenkovski] I do not think that your question has been fully formulated. It is true that crime is rising in some forms, but it is not true that the struggle against it has not started. In fact, compared with all the neighboring countries and in the region at large, the Republic of Macedonia continues to be the safest state. We are particularly worried by the fact that there has been an increase in the number of homicide cases lately. The responsibility here is on the institutions that are in charge of investigation and prosecution. However, I think that the situation should be looked at from the wider social, educational, and other aspects. One day, we shall have a multisector information system in the government and we are going to inform public opinion about the specific measures.

Conditions for Early Elections Are Not Created

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] The extraparliamentary opposition is preparing to collect 150,000 signatures so as to have early elections. The Liberals are asking for the dissolution of Parliament. Do you, as prime minister and chairman of the SDSM, view these actions as a normal attempt to win power in democracy or as an attempt to instigate new political turmoil and destabilization?

There are increasing signs that the authorities will use all mechanism to block this constitutional possibility.

[Crvenkovski] Normally, every initiative that has been started and conducted in conformity with the Constitution and law has its legitimacy and legacy, and there can be applied no forms or measures outside the institution to prevent or disable this.

However, since the motives for this initiative are nothing but political, we are quite entitled to say publicly what our political view on the idea for early elections is.

We cannot consider the opposition's political criticism of the concept of the present authorities as a democratic step, or the authorities' criticism of the opposition as suffocation of democratic processes.

We went to the elections with a program and committed ourselves to accomplish it with a four-year mandate. It is a fact that the citizens gave us their confidence. The VMRO-DPMNE [Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity] and DP [Democratic Party] decided to boycott the second round of the elections and they deliberately chose to be in the extraparliamentary opposition. It is clear that these two parties do not have the patience and they started a campaign for early elections with only one goal—to take over power. As for the Liberals, the situation is even clearer. Everybody knows that until a month ago, while they still had their ministers in the government, they were the strongest opponents of the idea of early elections. Now that they have joined the parliamentary opposition, they have found common interests with the VMRO-DPMNE and the DP and embraced the same idea. In other words, all their explanations are nothing but a struggle for power. I do not say this as an insult.

In a parliamentary democracy, you always have a winner and a loser at the elections. The loser always has the right to bring up the question of early elections, but it does not necessarily follow that this will happen. Early elections are usually scheduled when the executive or the legislative powers are blocked, or when their functioning is put at stake. This is not the case with us. Moreover, I am convinced that the VMRO-DPMNE and the DP are a better alternative neither from the aspect of program nor personnel for the future of the Republic of Macedonia and its citizens.

In any case, even if the results of the previous elections are repeated, and I believe that they will be, to organize early elections means that a number of projects that are of extreme importance for the life of the citizens and for the future of the Republic of Macedonia will be blocked for at least half a year.

[NOVA MAKEDONIJA] We suppose that at this moment you wish, most of all, to slow down the political turmoil so as to be able to concentrate on specific duties. What is the new government preparing for us, does it have anything that can create a more amiable atmosphere?

[Crvenkovski] There is a big engagement ahead of us and I am sure that we will be able to accomplish most of it in a positive way. Namely, on the foreign policy plane I expect as follows:

—Establishment of diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, by which we will complete the first phase of regulation of relations with our neighbors;

—Continuation of good neighborly relations on the principles of balanced relations and equidistance;

—On the 28th of this month, negotiations with the EU will start on the agreement on economic and trade cooperation, which is one of our strategic goals: European integration;

—Active participation in the "Partnership for Peace" Program, with the aim of becoming a member of NATO as soon as possible.

Regarding reforms on the political plane, our expectations are as follows:

—Realization of the projected territorial reorganization and the holding of local elections;

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—Reforms in the Criminal Code;

—Beginning of reforms in the administration.

Regarding reforms in the economic and financial system, we expect the following:

—Continuation of privatization and structural changes;

—Special program to support and promote small and medium-sized enterprises, for which we have provided 60 million German marks;

—Maintenance of stability of the national currency and control of inflation;

—Increase in industrial output and GNP.

I am convinced that 1996 will be the first step toward the development of the Republic of Macedonia and that this government will responsibly and consciously carry out its task and contribute to the accomplishment of the projected goals.

FYROM: Commentary Views Collection of Signatures

AU2603193296 Skopje MIC in English 26 Mar 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As announced, the "offensive" of the out-of-parliament opposition for early "Elections '96," has started. The path it has chosen is the collection of 150,000 signatures from voters for holding a referendum. The chief promoters of the initiative are the Democratic Party and VMRO-DPMNE [Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity], while PDPA [Party for Democratic Prosperity of Albanians] has also announced an intention to join in. The collection of signatures started on Sunday, and it will continue over the next ten days, in larger towns and villages in the Republic. The signatures are collected in public places, as well as the citizens' homes. The voters supporting the initiative, as announced, will place their signatures on special forms, with three copies: one copy will be delivered to the Macedonian [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] Assembly, one will go the party's archives, and the third will go to the Council of Europe, if a need for that arises, which will depend on the outcome of the initiative.

The pressure by the out-of-parliament opposition is great, and this should not come as a surprise, because it was announced in advance. Almost a month ago, because of a normative gap that treats the question of collection of signatures, i.e. the matter of the civil initiative, the parties-animators of the idea for early elections through the holding of a referendum, asked the State Election Commission, the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court for suggestions and interpretations as to the manner of collecting signatures. The initiators claim that they did not receive an answer, a response or any kind of interpretation from anywhere. Only the Minister of Justice stated that the Government was working on some laws connected with these questions, announcing that they would be adopted very shortly.

The Democrats and VMRO-DPMNE did not wait for that. Calling upon the constitutional decrees, they set out to collect 150,000 signatures, calling the action a civil initiative. Precisely this brings up the first dilemma: Is this really a civil initiative if the parties are placing it under their roof?! Although the theoreticians would say that the question, especially in our conditions when the civil initiative is not at all developed, is more than complex and that it can not be viewed in terms of black & white, still, the confusion is more than apparent: Civil or party initiative!? It is claimed that "the parties were not at all allowed to get involved in this, if it truly is to be called a civil initiative, because, by getting involved, they are giving this whole matter a different context, which can hardly be called civil." This way, practically, the parties are cutting the initiatives' branches, and preventing it from creating the effect that a real civil initiative would.

Another moment that seems to be causing problems is the place of collecting the signatures—in public places and in the citizens' families! Really, it remains unclear why the initiators did not make any efforts to collect the signatures, when it comes to "voters," in the municipal election commissions. With enough persistence, probably the whole procedure could have been channeled and organized in such a way to provide the presence of both the proposers and the authorities.

Who can check, in those "signature centers," if someone is a voter or not!? The I.D. card number is not sufficient proof of that, because, there is a big difference between a citizen and a voter. Even more problematic is the "knocking on doors." What with the citizens' privacy? Isn't that elementary right violated with this kind of agitation from door to door, from house to house, isn't it rude to disturb some one in their own home, even if it is a question of important state interest? Why isn't the individual, if he agrees with the initiative, left to come to the "signing stations" himself...?

It is quite possible that, in its defence, the out-of-parliament opposition may call upon the fact that there are literally no laws regulating this area and that it cannot wait forever for the authorities to "remember" to cover this matter. That is a fact and the authorities can not run away from it. However, announcements

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have already come that at the parliamentary session scheduled for Thursday, the focus will be on the law on the collection of signatures. It will determine at which places and in what manner the signatures for various civil initiatives will be collected. The question of controlling the proposer, as well as the authorities will also be regulated, so as to avoid eventual misuse and manipulation. The relation collection of signatures—submittal to the Assembly will also be regulated, as well as the decision of its top man whether the collected signatures call for a notice of referendum on questions that are constitutionally permitted. If it is determined that the demands are not "covered" constitutionally, then the Assembly will make a decision dismissing that initiative. However, that does not necessarily mean that the initiator has to be content with that parliamentary decision. The law also provides for the possibility of launching an initiative in front of the Constitutional Court—in such situations, it will be the one with the last word on the matter.

The Ministry of Justice claims that it is only a question of days when the law on signatures will be passed. In this context, there are explications that if the law is passed, then the collected signatures will not be valid, that is to say, they will have to be collected in a manner as prescribed by law. But, even despite such a risk, the parties-initiators refuse to wait! Why?—it seems they are the only ones who know the actual answer to this question.

FYROM: Rector Urges Legality of Tetovo University

AU2803213396 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A joint consultative meeting of the University of Tetovo (UT) Academic Board and representatives of Albanian political forces in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) was held last Saturday [23 March] in Tetovo.

Albanian-language BUJKU newspaper reported today (Tuesday) UT rector Dr. Fadil Sulejmani and the deans of five faculties were present in the meeting attended by representatives of all Albanian political parties in FYROM, including the PPD (Party for Democratic Prosperity), as well as the Deputy Education Minister Mr. Hasan Jashari. Fifteen out of 19 Albanian deputies to the FYROM Parliament were participating at the meeting, too.

Ways to secure legalization of the University of Tetovo, which has been treated as illegal and underground by the Macedonian authorities, were discussed at the meeting. The political forces pledged they were determined to see that the FYROM Law on Higher Education, including provisions on university level education in Albanian, be passed as soon as possible.

The University of Tetovo people insisted the Albanian political forces make their participation in the FYROM Parliament and Government conditional on the legalization of the Albanian-language University as the third university in the country, alongside the existing Macedonian-language universities in Shkup (Skopje) and Oher (Ohrid).

As many as 1,300 students are currently studying at the University of Tetovo, which has 150 teachers, its rector Fadil Sulejmani said.

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Poland: Opposition Protests Kwasniewski's Visit to Belarus

WS2803142296 Warsaw ZYCIE WARSZAWY in Polish 28 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by "GJ": "Diplomacy. UW and ROP Protest; Kwasniewski Should Not Go to Belarus"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The opposition is protesting the visit President Aleksander Kwasniewski is scheduled to pay to Belarus this Saturday [30 March]. One of the groups protesting is the Freedom Union [UW] parliamentary club. UW claims that Kwasniewski's meeting with Belarusian President Aleksander Lukashenka might be viewed as a manifestation of support for his repressive and pro-Moscow policy.

Jan Olszewski's Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland [ROP] has also issued a statement. It claims that Kwasniewski's meeting with Lukashenka should be canceled. "Instead of meeting with the man who is destroying the Belarusian state, we should rather voice our solidarity with the Belarusian patriots who demonstrated in Minsk a few days ago against what the state authorities were doing," the statement reads. ROP claims "President Kwasniewski's visit to Belarus will be perceived as a sign of support for Russian policies, which serves neither Belarus nor Poland."

The Panorama television newscast, quoting unofficial sources, said that the Presidential Chancellery is considering rescheduling Kwasniewski's visit.

On 2 April, Russia and Belarus are to sign a unification agreement. Both states will share a national emblem and anthem. Last Sunday some 30,000 Belarusians protested in Minsk against the agreement.

Poland: Further on Opposition to Kwasniewski-Lukashenka Meeting

LD2803212396 Warsaw TVP Television First Program Network in Polish 1830 GMT 28 Mar 96

[Relayed by Warsaw TV Polonia Network]

[FBIS Translated Text] After holding political consultations, President Aleksander Kwasniewski has decided to meet with President Aleksandr Lukashenka of Belarus on Saturday. The opposition both in Poland and in Belarus has protested against this decision.

[Unidentified correspondent] The Freedom Union [UW] and the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland [ROP] have spoken out against this decision, stressing that meeting with President Lukashenka after he has declared the intention to join Belarus to Russia and after the pacification by the militia of a demonstration by opponents of this unification can be read as support for his policy of limiting Belarusian independence.

[Begin Andrzej Potocki, UW spokesman, recording] The trip ought not to take place at the moment. If it takes place, this trip cannot lack themes, which refer to feelings of dignity and justice. A theme of condemnation of what is taking place at the moment in Belarus and of the policy of President Lukashenka cannot be lacking. [end recording]

[Correspondent] Representatives of the Belarusian opposition express themselves in similar tones, saying they would expect of Poles, as has been the case in the past, support for their aspirations toward independence.

[Begin Valeriy Buyvol, Belarusian National Front spokesman recording] We expect that together, as good neighbors, the Polish nation and the Belarusian nation—we will build our future, we will go along this road toward democracy, toward a normal life, and of course, we will be victorious over all these demonic forces of fascism, Lukashenkism, or however else they call themselves. [end recording]

[Correspondent] The president finally decided to meet with President Lukashenka on Saturday:

[Begin Wojciech Lamentowicz, under secretary of state in the Presidential Chancellery, recording] President Kwasniewski will pay a visit to the president of Belarus, as the good neighbor of the Polish Republic with which we signed a treaty on good-neighborly relations in 1992, as the first treaty with a state that emerged from the Soviet Union and with which we have several dozen international agreements, with which we wish to have good-neighborly relations; and we believe that it will be a neighbor that is independent and democratic. After consultations with Ukrainian President Kuchma and Lithuanian President Brazauskas, the president has, despite certain reservations made at home, decided that the visit will take place. [end recording]

[Correspondent] Marek Karp, of the Eastern Studies Center [OSW], feels that forsaking the visit would confirm the Belarusian stereotype of the Pole as an arrogant lord who talks condescendingly and that President Lukashenka would have a successive argument for creating out of Belarus a besieged fortress; he would nominate himself the leader of this, and the alleged threat from Poland would justify surrender to the protection of Russia.

[Begin Marek Karp, OSW spokesman, recording] Were we now to forsake this meeting, would we not by chance be placing ourselves in a position favoring, in general terms, the plans of Moscow? Are we not thus stressing that we no longer recognise Belarus as a state, that we

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already recognise it as a margravate or a protectorate? [end recording]

[Correspondent] The meeting will take place on Saturday in [?Viskula], in Belovezhskaya Pushcha, where the treaty on the dissolution of the Soviet Union was signed in 1991.

Poland: Defense Minister To Visit Moscow 2 Apr

WS2803134296 Warsaw SZTANDAR in Polish 28 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by "W.L.": "MON Head Sets Off for Moscow"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On Tuesday, 2 April, a "very small but highly competent group" of high-ranking officials from the Ministry of National Defense [MON], headed by Minister Stanislaw Dobrzanski, is setting off for Moscow. MON Spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Eugeniusz Mleczak has confirmed this information.

We learned that Dobrzanski will be accompanied by General Zbigniew Zalewski, deputy chief of the General Staff and head of logistics, and Colonel Boguslaw Smolski, director of the Development and Implementation Department at MON. The fact that Smolski is going suggests that arms will be the topic of discussions, mainly Russian-made spare parts for post-Soviet military equipment, which continues to dominate within the Polish Armed Forces. We also want to obtain subassembly units for Mi-24D helicopters we received as a gift from Germany.

Poland: Oleksy 'Insulted' by No Invitation From Elizabeth II

WS2803133896 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 28 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Agata Nowakowska: "The SdRP Will Investigate Why Elizabeth II Did Not Invite Its Leader; An Insult to Oleksy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *The British royal couple did not wish to dine in the company of Jozef Oleksy. Out of revenge, the chairman of the Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland [SdRP] has announced that he does not like monarchies and accused Great Britain of meddling in the affairs of others.*

Elizabeth II did not invite Oleksy to breakfast at the Hotel Bristol, attended by more than 70 people, or to the reception in the foyer of the National Theater for over 1,000 guests.

Invitations—huge white cards with a golden crown and "E-II-R" (Elizabeth II Regina)—informed the guests that the queen had ordered her chamberlain to invite them to her reception.

It is impossible to list the guests attending both receptions. The queen invited all former prime ministers since 1989 to the Bristol. Oleksy was the only exception. His absence was also felt at the gala ballet performance and reception at the theater. Among those invited, however, was former Interior Minister Andrzej Milczanowski.

"I consider this an unpleasant insult. I do not know why the British behaved in this way," said Oleksy on Radio Zet yesterday. "I was a Sejm speaker. I was a prime minister. I am a party chairman."

The SdRP head quoted a statement made by former Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski on the "Pulse of the Day" television program on Tuesday [26 March]: "Mr. Skubiszewski said this was a significant political signal and suggested that the fact that I was not invited might have been related to the so-called Oleksy case."

"If this was indeed the motive of the British, I might call it meddling in Poland's internal, unsettled affairs," said Oleksy.

Craig Murray from the British Embassy explained that the invitations were "private" and that positions held were not taken into consideration.

Jerzy Szmajdzinski, head of the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] parliamentary club, told GAZETA WYBORCZA yesterday that the SdRP will investigate why the Polish side so humbly allowed Oleksy to be dishonored. As we all remember, Elizabeth II came to Poland at the invitation of Lech Walesa but was hosted by Aleksander Kwasniewski. The Presidential Chancellery agreed on all the details of the visit with the British side.

In an attempt to save the situation, Kwasniewski at the last minute invited Oleksy to the dinner at the Presidential Palace in honor of the queen. As we learned, the SdRP chairman did not utter a single word to the crowned head.

SLD circles at the Sejm were outraged. "This is a serious faux pas on the part of British diplomacy," said Szmajdzinski.

Richard Holbrooke, the former U.S. assistant secretary of state for Europe, also refused to meet with Oleksy during his visit to Warsaw.

"Does the SdRP regret it elected Oleksy chairman? First Holbrooke, now the queen...," we asked.

"Each day brings further confirmation that we made the right choice," Szmajdzinski replied. He added that Holbrooke does not count because he was a low-ranking official.

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Poland: Oleksy Case Deemed Reason for WSI Chief's Dismissal

WS2803134396 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 28 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Jerzy Jachowicz: "General Malejczyk Accuses Minister Dobrzanski; Quashing the WSI?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *The dismissed chief of the Military Information Services [WSI], General Konstanty Malejczyk, accused the defense minister yesterday of discharging him for political reasons, one of them being the Oleksy case.*

According to Malejczyk, the government wants obedient heads of secret services. [Defense] Minister Stanislaw Dobrzanski retorts that, under Malejczyk's leadership, the WSI was not dynamic enough. The opposition suspects, however, that there were political reasons for the dismissal.

Yesterday the Sejm Secret Services Commission protested the appointment of the new WSI chief, Commander Kazimierz Glowacki, behind its back. The commission wants Sejm Speaker Jozef Zych to speak with the prime minister, who in turn should draw Dobrzanski's attention to the fact that he violated Sejm regulations and did not show respect for a declaration made by the prime minister that the commission will approve all changes in the highest offices within the civilian and military secret services. Zych confirms that the Ministry of National Defense [MON] violated Sejm regulations.

Dobrzanski defended himself: "Malejczyk had what it took, but times have changed. The WSI faces new challenges. Poland is to enter NATO. Perhaps the new chief and the entire WSI need more energy."

After a meeting with the commission and the speaker, Malejczyk told journalists that he was probably dismissed for denying "certain political centers" access to the secret services. "Attempts at establishing such ties intensified after Dobrzanski took over as head of MON." Malejczyk maintains, however, that the Oleksy case might be the most probable reason for his dismissal. He remembered that he had been interviewed by an extraordinary Sejm commission as an expert on Russian secret services. He spoke about the scope of their operations and their methods of collecting information. The "absolutely true information," he said, "might have been considered incriminating," but it might have just as well weakened the charges leveled against Oleksy.

Malejczyk revealed that last Friday [22 March] he received a summons from the Military Prosecutor's Office to testify as an expert in connection with the Oleksy case. He informed Dobrzanski about this on Monday. On Tuesday he was to receive instructions from the minister on whether he himself or a different officer would testify on behalf of the WSI. He never got an answer because on Tuesday morning he was given five minutes to pack his things and leave his office. The reason for the dismissal was given in one curt and, according to Malejczyk, bizarre sentence: "In view of the interests of the Armed Forces."

Malejczyk described his dismissal as a "quashing of the WSI." He pointed out that the group currently in power did exactly the same thing in the Office of State Protection when it dismissed General Gromoslaw Czempinski. "I know well what it means if two secret service heads are dismissed before the prosecutor's office announces its decision on the Oleksy case."

Bogdan Borusewicz, deputy chairman of the Sejm Secret Services Commission, also claims that the two dismissals "are symptomatic of the Oleksy case." He told reporters that, during a meeting with Minister Dobrzanski, he "tried to find out whether there were substantial reasons for the dismissal but did not find any." According to Andrzej Zelazowski (of the Democratic Left Alliance), the fact that Malejczyk claims the reasons for his dismissal are political "is a far-reaching oversimplification."

Ryszard Bugaj (of the Union of Labor): "One thing is certain. This decision was made in haste. That is why Malejczyk's arguments sound more likely."

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Romania: SRI Reveals Who Removed Magureanu File

AU2803191896 Bucharest EVENIMENTUL ZILEI in Romanian 22 Mar 96 p 6

[Article by Cristian Muntean and Sorin Bogdan: "Through the SRI's Internal Investigation, It Has Been Determined That the Copies of Virgil Magureanu's Resident File Were Distributed by Colonel Ion Adamescu and Reserve Colonel Petru Pele Who Work at the Timis County Regional Operation Center"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Authorized sources informed us that, through the internal investigation carried out by the Romanian Intelligence Service [SRI], it has been determined exactly who took Virgil Magureanu's [SRI director] resident file from the archives of the former Timis County Securitate. They are Reserve Colonel Petru Pele, former head of the Timis County Regional Operation Center (COZ Timis), and Colonel Ioan Adamescu, employed by COZ Timis.

According to the results of the investigation, the two officers made copies of the file before turning it over to General Victor Marcu and distributed the copies after 31 May 1994. On that day, after Virgil Magureanu had come to Timisoara, the leadership of SRI Timis County and of COZ Timis were replaced. Colonel Petru Pele was replaced by Major Costel Mataragiu. At the same time, Colonel Ion Adamescu, although a veteran employee in the intelligence work, remained a simple worker. These sources believe that two persons' actions, i.e., giving copies to brothers Florin and George Boieru and to the weekly ROMANIA MARE, is a result of their personal discontent with the way the SRI director had valued their work and that the two thought the scandal provoked by publication of the file would cause Virgil Magureanu to be replaced. The same sources characterize Petru Pele as a poor intelligence officer who came to the Securitate from the police force, through influential people who pulled strings in his favor, and that he was manipulated by Colonel Ion Adamescu, the "brain" of the whole affair.

To take measures against these two persons, the SRI is awaiting the conclusions of the Parliamentary Commission in charge of investigating the case. Likewise, the leadership of the REALITATEA BANATEANA [Timis County local daily] will submit a penal action against brothers Florin and George Boieru to the Timis County Court Prosecuting Magistracy, for keeping documents that represent state secrets. It remains to be seen what measures will be taken against C.V. Tudor [Greater Romania Party president and head of ROMANIA MARE weekly], who is in the same situation.

Romania: Senator Refutes Tinca's Remark on NATO

AU2803182796 Bucharest EVENIMENTUL ZILEI in Romanian 22 Mar 96 p 4

[Report by Bogdan Tiberiu Iacob on statement made by Radu Timofte, president of the Senate's Defense Commission: "Romania's Nonintegration in NATO Would Mean a Disaster in the Current European Political-Economic Situation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Radu Timofte, president of the Romanian Senate's Defense Commission, yesterday told our newspaper exclusively that the recent statement made by Defense Minister Gheorghe Tinca to the effect that Romania's nonintegration in NATO would not be such a serious problem, seems at least hazardous.

"Not only the nonintegration in general, but also the nonintegration with the first group of countries that will be accepted, would be a disaster," said the PDSR [Social Democracy Party of Romania] Senator Radu Timofte, "because Hungary's integration before ours, for example, would certainly create insecurity in our area. Apart from this, it is uncertain whether that country would later vote for our integration, according to the NATO Charter, which requires unanimity from the members of the alliance to accept new partners. On the other hand, this would be a great economic blow to Romania, not only at the military level because the nonintegration in NATO would also mean an obstruction to our access to the European Union. As is known, these bodies go 'hand in hand.' I cannot understand on what grounds Mr. Tinca makes such a statement."

Romania: Composition of Angola Peacekeeping Battalion

AU2803173196 Bucharest COTIDIANUL in Romanian 25 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Gabi Zamora: "The Neagoe Basarab Battalion Sent Its First Echelon to Angola"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The first echelon, consisting of 150 military personnel of the Neagoe Basarab 26th Infantry Battalion, among whom are 18 officers, left yesterday at about 1845 from the Otopeni airport, destination Angola, for a six-month period [to participate in the United Nations Angola Verification Mission—UNAVEM III]. The battalion, which is under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Ionel Palsoiu, replaces the one that is to arrive home today, namely the Calugareni 2d Battalion under the command of Colonel Petre Botezatu.

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The Neagoe Basarab Battalion includes two subunits, one coming from the town of Iasi and one from Bistrita. Altogether the unit consists of approximately 800 soldiers. Included are all the necessary military branches necessary to carry out peacekeeping missions: infantry, engineer corps, and military police. From among the specific actions to be carried out during the mission of this battalion, we would like to mention those related to the setting up of checkpoints, patrols, and escorting personalities.

The unit, which is headquartered in Craiova, has already taken part in similar drills, namely one codenamed New Spirit and held in Kalamata, in the Greek Republic, and one bearing the code name Cooperative Determination '95 and held in our country, near Sibiu. On both those occasions, it was confirmed that the personnel are properly prepared for carrying out peacekeeping missions.

Romania: Constantinescu Optimistic About Election

AU2603211696 Bucharest JURNALUL NATIONAL in Romanian 21 Mar 96 p 6

[Interview with Emil Costantinescu, president of the Democratic Convention of Romania, by Gena Saru; place and date not given: "I Will End Up in First Place After the First Ballot"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Saru] From your position as the candidate of the Democratic Convention of Romania [CDR] for the presidency, how do you view the large number of candidates for this position?

[Constantinescu] To me, this appears like a normal evolution, because one proceeds from the idea that a presence in the presidential elections can increase the respective party's chances. Therefore, there is a real basis for this development, because all public opinion polls show that the interest of the voters in the presidential elections is much higher than in the other ones. On the other hand, there are also various domestic and international developments which have led to this agglomeration of candidates in the left zone of the political landscape. This time, there is no longer a single large group of interests there, whose single representative was perceived in the person of President Iliescu. This is because many contradictory interests have emerged in the meantime, thus splitting the initial homogeneity. I do not believe that doctrine problems are behind this increase in the number of candidates to the left of the political spectrum, but rather various economic-financial interests or certain transnational geopolitical considerations.

Anyhow, as the CDR's sole candidate in the presidential elections, I consider this situation as very favorable for us.

[Saru] What chances do you think you have in the "struggle" with the current president Ion Iliescu?

[Constantinescu] My chances are very good. It is hard to imagine that another right-wing candidate will manage to put together the necessary 200,000 signatures of support, without an organized force behind him, with structures throughout the country. In these circumstances, I believe there will be no difficulty for me to end up in first place after the first ballot.

[Saru] If you are going to finish first, can you forecast who will end up in second place?

[Constantinescu] It is very difficult to make an educated guess in this respect—or better said, there are too many guesses that can be made.

Romania: Constantinescu Outlines CDR's Financial Views

AU2703204396 Bucharest ADEVARUL in Romanian 21 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Dan Vartopeanu: "The Democratic Convention of Romania Claims That It Found the Necessary Money To Implement the 'Contract With Romania'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a news conference in Bucharest yesterday, Emil Constantinescu, president of the Democratic Convention of Romania [CDR], presented the sources of financing and the CDR's estimates for the necessary expenditures required by the implementation of the "Contract With Romania," a program launched by the CDR in November 1995. Four of the CDR experts in the field were also present at the meeting: Mircea Ciumara, Viorel Catarama, Nicolae Noica (vice president of the Civic Alliance), and Dan Constantinescu (from the CDR's Budget Department). President Constantinescu said that, within a period of 200 days, the CDR intends to resolve certain issues efficiently, particularly the setting up of the legislative and administrative foundation for a long-term action. Referring to the financing sources, the following figures was supplied:

—The implementation of the proposed projects in the first 200 days will cost 103 billion lei, to be obtained from the Intervention Fund, which is at the government's disposal, and from the drastic reduction (50 percent) of the expenditures of the presidency, Parliament, and the Government's General Secretariat.

—The expenses for the implementation of the Contract in the second half of next year will amount to 1,683

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billion lei, 65 percent of which will be obtained from the value-added tax budgetary revenues, 18 percent from consumption taxes, and 17 percent from customs fees. The calculations were made on the basis of the 1995 and 1996 budgets, by taking into consideration the fact that the 1997 budget will be worked out by the current cabinet.

—The costs for 1998 are estimated at 4,710 billion lei. The financing sources will change, since one must start from the premise that fiscal evasion will be greatly reduced and that structural changes will occur in the Romanian economy. Likewise, one expects that a CDR government would enjoy greater credibility abroad, since it is ready to offer real legislative guarantees to foreign investors. It is estimated that the foreign financing over a four-year government period will reach $50-70 billion [as received]; this figure has been reached by comparing the value of foreign investments in Poland and Hungary.

Answering a question put by our newspaper, Mr. Nicolae Noica gave a concrete example of the way in which the necessary financial resources were calculated. He dealt with Point 14 of the Contract, which refers to the paving of country roads, a pledge often ridiculed by the political adversaries. There are 16,000 km of road in Romania today, and the cost of paving 1 km is 130 million lei. Therefore, the sums required for 1998 (when the action will be in full swing of development) will amount to 312 billion lei, which can be allocated from the state budget without exceptional efforts. At the same time, the experts believe that 50,000 new and well-paid jobs will be created nationwide. Likewise, Mr. Viorel Catarama said, this illustrates the way in which the CDR plans to deal with the problem of industrial restructuring and the absorbtion of the resulting manpower. Once in government, the CDR will give priority to massive investments in the infrastructure, particularly through franchises, and to the faster development of small and medium-sized enterprises, both of which are meant to provide employment for the labor force.

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Slovenia: U.S. Permits State, FYROM To Purchase Arms

AU2903094496 Ljubljana DELO in Slovene 14 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Vladimir Vodusek: "Complete Lifting of Arms Embargo Definitely Not Far Off"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ljubljana, 14 March—The White House memorandum stating that Slovenia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia [FYROM] have fulfilled the conditions that permit them to purchase weapons and equipment through the American system of Foreign Military Sales was anticipated. That is how the Slovene and FYROM defense ministers, Jelko Kacin and Blagoje Handziski, respectively, commented on the memorandum. Handziski was visiting our country today.

"We welcome President Clinton's statement, which means a change in the status hitherto. It is also an American acknowledgment that they understand and see that, in comparison with other countries that have formed on the territory of former Yugoslavia, Slovenia's position is different. The same holds true for the FYROM," said Kacin. Handziski said that he was glad that the two countries are regarded equally. "We have always demanded to be differentiated from other countries of former Yugoslavia and to have a special status. American assistance to Slovenia and the FYROM will increase security in the region, which is in the interest of Europe as well as America," added Handziski.

Ever since preparation of the Dayton agreement, there have been two-way communication and considerable correspondence with American Defense Secretary Perry. In this correspondence it was determined that it was necessary to fulfill the conditions while the embargo was still in effect, in order to improve the quality of cooperation later on.

The recognition of the Republic of Slovenia's rights to make purchases through the Foreign Military Sales program, enables different possibilities of purchases and payment methods, as well as access to technology that is in use in the American army, that can be upgraded and modernized, and sold on to other countries.

When asked whether the embargo had been lifted for good, Defense Minister Kacin answered that "this event does not mean the lifting of the embargo, since the embargo was imposed by the Security Council of the United Nations, which has to lift it as well." The defense ministry expects the UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali to state in his report that peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been established. This in turn lifts the embargo, except for—according to the Annex of the Dayton agreement—heavy weapons and ammunition, mines, airplanes, and helicopters. The embargo for this category of weapons will be lifted 90 days later.

"Since most countries are coming to the conclusion that the embargo in force against the Republic of Slovenia is unjust and unfounded, we expect to be treated accordingly and that the activities of like-minded countries in the EU will improve as well," said Kacin.

He also commented that "Moscow's decision is important for us because a great deal of the equipment used in the Slovene Army is of eastern origin. From now on we have the possibility to obtain spare parts more easily and cheaply since the maintenance of our current technology is quite expensive. I am convinced that in the future we will find systems that will satisfy our needs as well since the weapons that come from the east are effective enough, are equal to western products, and are cheaper. We therefore expect that whatever can be modernized to accord with NATO standards, will also be of interest to us."

[Box, p 2]

The FYROM Defense Minister visited Ljubljanski Vrh [a hill near Ljubljana], and examined the radar that Slovenia bought in the United States and has been using successfully for some time. The FYROM is also facing a decision concerning the purchase of such technology. According to Dr. Blagoje Handziski, today's talks also included the possibility of cooperation in the area of special purpose industry, as well as in training and the organization of joint military exercises. In accordance with the Skopje agreement on cooperation between the two defense ministries from 1994, they also agreed on an exchange between military attaches.

Slovenia: Deputies Debate White Book on Italian Crimes

AU2803160196 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 28 Mar 96

[Report by Igor Juric on the extraordinary session of the State Chamber on Slovene foreign policy in Ljubljana on 28 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Juric] A sharp debate on the White Book [on Italian crimes during World War II] was sparked off by Ivo Hvalica, who said that its publication has deteriorated our relations with Italy and overheated the political scene. As for the book, he said:

[Hvalica] This represents an abuse of the book for party and preelectoral purposes.

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[Juric] He also wanted to know what our Ambassador Bekes was told in the talks with Foreign Minister Agnelli in Rome yesterday. Minister Thaler replied:

[Thaler] The talks conducted by our Ambassador Bekes with Minister Agnelli were the first opportunity after a long time to hear the position of official Italy on the signing of the associate agreement, that is, our accession to the European Union firsthand.

[Juric] After the talks Agnelli said that the White Book does not contribute to good relations. Lojze Peterle [Christian Democratic Party] expressed doubts that we would achieve anything with this book. He also asked whether the price for our entry into the Union was still the same after yesterday's Agnelli-Bekes talks and if Italy still has the same views on the Spanish proposal.

In the debate on EU entry, the opposition continues to fear that entry into the Union could threaten our identity. They maintain that the government is not at all open to consensus on this issue. Democrat Tone Persak said that if the coalition wishes to force a different solution, then it should also assume responsibility for it. Afterwards the coalition deputies replied in the style of Christian Democrat Miroslav Grzina:

[Grzina] There has been no alternative to this very date. None, with the exception of the one that would eat grass [sentence as heard].

[Juric] The committee for international relations met again at the request of Social Democrat Ivo Hvalica, but it passed no new decisions. The committee will probably meet again today.

Slovenia: PM's Economic Council Opposes Salary Increases

AU2803094696 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 2100 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The prime minister's economic council today assessed that the economy should be relieved of some of its burdens and that its competitiveness should be increased. The ministers concluded that the fulfillment of some demands, especially for higher salaries in the public sector, would increase the burden on the economy additionally, which would lead to a decline in the economic growth, inflation, and deterioration in the overall situation in the economy. For that reason the government will continue to insist on preserving healty finances and will prepare additional measures to unburden the economy.

The economic council paid special attention to the situation in the TAM enterprise and in the textile and leather industry. It supported the concept for solving the problems in TAM and emphasized that as many jobs as possible should be saved and as few obligations as possible shifted onto the taxpayers' shoulders.

Slovenia: United List Wants Health Minister Interpellated

AU2803160896 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The strike of physicians merely reflects the deteriorating situation and the ineffective and irresponsible conduct of the social care policy. For that reason, the deputies of the United List of Social Democrats requested an interpellation against Health Minister Bozidar Voljc. [passage omitted]

Slovenia: Christian Democrats Silence Faction at Conference

AU2903093396 Ljubljana DNEVNIK in Slovene 25 Mar 96 p 2

[Commentary by Miran J. Lesjak: "Unity of Action"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The week-long crusade of the SKD [Slovene Christian Democrats] in the Stajerska region ended with the annual SKD conference in Maribor on Saturday [23 March] and can be labeled a complete success from the point of view of political marketing. The Christian Democrats have politically entered an area which is antipolitical because of economic poverty and social degradation and therefore not party oriented. Moreover, this environment is equally overwhelmed by leftist social utopianism as well as by rightist populism. The Christian Democrats succeeded in presenting themselves as a political option which would offer Maribor a third, compromise-like, developmental path. They managed to do this by emphasizing the importance of expertise, economic rationalism, and social justice.

However, politics are full of contradictions. The external success of the SKD has balanced out the internal party events that took place on Saturday. The Christian Democrats attempted to avoid an internal confrontation at the conference meeting. They succeeded in doing this to the extent that it is now, after the conference, possible to speak of the defeat of the SKD in its entirety.

The conference was dedicated to the fact that it should end as soon as possible and hide what was lurking under the surface. This was done through lengthy reports about the party's work and with procedural limitations. What was hiding underneath the surface was the case of Vida Cadonic-Spelic, the SKD secretary general. The executive board of the SKD did not enable her to return to her workplace and political position (!) after her maternity leave ended. She was elected to the position by the SKD congress. The secretary gemeral was present

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at the Maribor conference and was also its guilty conscience. The issue was the reason for embarrassing discussions, explanations and explanations, and at the same time—what a paradox—a trap that caught those people who were naively defending her (women's) rights.

Although these rights were violated and the party's actions are in direct conflict with its own official position toward maternity leave and motherhood, the conference did not deal with the issue. What no one dared to mention in front of a microphone, could be heard unofficially. This is the judgment that the secretary general is not desired within the leadership of the party because of her (minority) political opinions and not because of the possible lack of continuity in secretarial work before the elections nor her demanding parental duties. While the party was apparently trying to explain its understanding of social matters and holding debates on women's and mothers' rights, what was really going on was an internal conflict between SKD political factions. The Christian Democrats were prepared to risk resentment from the side of the voters to do their spring cleaning and, according to the party's leader [Lojze Peterle], have one party and therefore one leadership, one education and one newspaper. In other words, a united policy, that is, a preelection "unity of action" as the communist party used to call it. A look at the conference room at the Maribor Theater, where supporters of the former "Stanic faction" sat lonely among the crowd, had shown that the Christian Democrats had succeeded. The questions that remain are now what price the party will have to pay for implementing such methods to ensure unity, and when will it happen that the members of silenced factions start joining other parties (as it had happened to the aforementioned party and as it is today happening to Jansa's [leader of the Social Democratic Party of Slovenia] party).

One thing is certain. The party, which was one of the most pluralistic parties and had endeavored to carry through its inner political democracy by patenting its party "wings," has moved a step back through the current process. In short, political retrogression.

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Federal

FRY: Talks With IMF, World Bank Begin in Paris

LD2803164596 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1632 GMT 28 Mar 96

[Article by Momcilo Pudar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Paris, March 28 (TANJUG)—The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank started talks in Paris on Thursday by discussing Yugoslavia's membership and development of mutual relations.

The talks are expected to be a very complex dialogue on accumulated problems mainly caused by the several-year comprehensive and mandatory U.N. sanctions against Yugoslavia.

Agreement in principle has been reached on a need to reintegrate Yugoslavia into these organizations as part of efforts to implement the Dayton peace agreement and to solve the crisis in the former Yugoslavia.

IMF and the World Bank have positively reacted to Belgrade's official request for Yugoslavia's reintegration into the international financial scene.

The head of the Yugoslav delegation, Governor of the Yugoslav National Bank Dragoslav Avramovic presented a programme of economic recovery in yugoslavia, which provides for an essential improvement in the living standard.

In order to resolve its accumulated problems, Yugoslavia needs international credit support and a temporary postponement of the debts inherited from the former Yugoslav federation. Yugoslavia hopes that it will obtain favourable international credits necessary for the implementation of its programme of economic recovery and normalization.

The officials of the World Bank and IMF showed understanding for Avramovic's call but agreement has to be reached on all aspects, including very complex problems.

The Paris round of talks is due to last until April 3.

A successful Paris round, as expected by both sides, will also mean a "green light" for a normaliztion of relations between Yugoslavia and international financial institutions.

That will allow Yugoslavia to be invited to talks with the Paris Club of donor countries and international consortium of banks made up of 640 banking institutions which will mainly deal with inherited debt and credits. The talks may start as early as next month.

FRY: Delegate on Coming Conference on Arms Control

LD2703193696 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1744 GMT 27 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vienna, March 27 (TANJUG)—The seventh round of the Vienna conference on arms control in the Balkans is broaching on essential issues which should lead to the signing of an agreement, Yugoslav delegate to the talks Dragomir Djokic said on Wednesday [26 March].

Ambassador Djokic, who is heading the Yugoslav delegation to the Vienna talks, recalled that under the terms of the Dayton and Paris documents the arms control agreement is to be signed by June 6.

The present round of the talks, which are being held under the auspices of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, started on March 18 and is to last to March 29.

Besides the Yugoslav delegation the talks are attended by representatives of Serb Republic, Croatia, Muslim-Croat Federation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Muslim government.

The principal aim of the arms talks, started on January 5 in the OSCE Vienna headquarters, is to reach a military balance between Balkan countries and ensure a lasting stabilisation of the situation in the region.

Ambassador Djokic told Yugoslav reporters in Vienna that the first drafts of the document are being examined at this round of the talks.

The negotiating parties now have to determine areas of common ground as well as those where their stands differ, Djokic said.

The sides will have the period until the next round of talks, scheduled in the second half of April, to clear issues that have remained unresolved in this phase.

These questions include the volume of the verification and means of carrying out inspections of military potentials as well as some other questions related to this, Djokic said.

One of the disputed questions is whether personnel is included in the agreement on limiting five categories of arms, determined by the Dayton accords.

The OSCE role in the implementation of the agreement is also an important question regarding which there are some principled differences, Djokic said.

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There are a series of questions of a principled, political and technical nature that have to be tackled in the talks, he said.

Djokic said that he believed generally acceptable solutions would be found through the concereted efforts by all the parties to the talks.

FRY: Vienna Talks Seek To Promote Bilateral Relations

LD2803151496 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1455 GMT 28 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vienna, Mar. 28 (TANJUG)—Austria and Yugoslavia are interested in raising as soon as possible diplomatic relations to the level of ambassador, the Yugoslav Assistant Foreign Minister Zivadin Jovanovic said on Thursday.

In talks between the Yugoslav delegation and senior officials at the Austrian Foreign Ministry, parliament and political parties, the two sides reaffirmed full commitment to the Bosnia peace process and stressed the need for intensifying preparations for the holding of free and fair elections in Bosnia.

The officials, including Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner, senior officials of the ruling Social-Democratic Party, the People's Party and the Viennese municipal government, set out Yugoslavia's constructive role and contribution to the Bosnia peace process.

The two sides positively assessed efforts toward renewing bilateral economic cooperation through direct contact between the two chambers of commerce, as well as cooperation between the Belgrade and Viennese ports.

They agreed to realize direct economic, traffic, social, educational and other contacts between the two governments on expert or higher levels, Jovanovic told reporters after the two-day working visit.

The talks, attended also by Yugoslav Charge d'Affaires in Vienna Dobrosav Vejzovic, examined important issues pertaining to the more than 300,000 Yugoslav citizens working in Austria.

The first visit of a senior Yugoslav official to Austria and the first official contact on that level in the past three years was noted on Thursday by all leading Austrian papers, which set out Austria's readiness to soon recognize Yugoslavia and renew economic cooperation.

The scope of bilateral economic cooperation before 1992 amounted to 500,000 million German marks.

FRY: Technical Cooperation With DPRK, Russia Confirmed

LD2703201796 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1909 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 27 (TANJUG)—The Yugoslav government on Wednesday drew up a bill on confirming an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation between Yugoslavia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Yugoslav information secretariat said in a statement released after the government session, which was chaired by Prime Minister Radoje Kontic, that the agreement provided a legal framework for establishing and developing different forms of scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries.

The statement said that the government had adopted a report on the talks between Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister and Economy Minister Nikola Sainovic and Russian Minister for Fuel and Energy Yuriy Konstantinovich Shafranik.

The Russian Federation is one of Yugoslavia's most important long-term partners in the field of energy resources supply, it was said in the talks.

Measures were established for a further stimulation of cooperation between the two countries' businessmen and the implementation of the signed inter-governmental agreements and protocols.

The signing of agreements in the field of oil and natural gas and the forming of mixed Yugoslav-Russian companies were agreed upon, the statement said.

The Yugoslav government on Wednesday adopted a number of other reports.

Serbia

Serbia: Police Said To Obstruct Preparations for Nis Rally

AU2803145496 Belgrade NASA BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 28 Mar 96 p 4

[Article by Z. Miladinovic: "The Police Are Increasing the Tension"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nis—The regime is repeating the scenario employed at the 9 March rally in Belgrade according to which the opposition rally, planned for 30 March in Nis, will not be banned, but everything will be done to obstruct it, Democratic Party Vice President [DS] Zoran Zivkovic said yesterday at a joint DS and Serbian Renewal Movement [SPO] news conference. He went on to explain that the police are complicating

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preparations for the opposition rally, which is to be addressed by Vesna Pesic, Zoran Djindjic, and Vuk Draskovic. "In spite of the fact that the police do not want to concretely cooperate with us and is increasing tensions before the rally, it is certain that the rally will be held on Oslobodjenje Square, precisely at noon on 30 March," Zivkovic said. Zvonimir Budic, republican deputy and president of the SPO Regional Committee, said that the rally had been reported several days ago and that yesterday, DS and SPO representatives had "very concrete talks at the Nis police station" during which they were asked to say where the rostrum would be. "Following this conversation at the police station, we were informed by the managements of the Central and Ambassador hotels that they had had 'consultations' and had decided that their terraces were not to be used as rostrums. However, while planning to use the terraces as rostrums, we were wise enough to ask the Nis police to issue a license for erecting a rostrum in front of the Central Hotel, so the speakers will be visible," Budic said.

SPO and DS representatives said that "for the time being, we have an agreement with the Electricity Board allowing us to use power" and that they had submitted a request to be allowed to use megaphones in the city, but that they had so far received no answer from the police. The management of the private radio station Belami does not want to broadcast the announcement for the rally, despite the fact that it has already been paid for. Budic said that some 20,000 flyers announcing the rally had already been distributed, and that around 1,000 activists and 150 security officers from various parties are helping prepare the rally.

We have invited Mile Ilic to attend the rally, and he answered in a reconciliatory tone that can be taken as verbal confirmation. The president of the Nis Socialists, who earlier claimed that there was no opposition in the city, has now asked us to join the "Movement for Nis," so that in spite of the fact that we do not exist, we can jointly realize the movement's epic goals, Nis SPO spokesman Miroslav Milanovic said. SPO and DS representatives added that in addition to the SPO, DS, and Democratic Party of Serbia presidents, the rally in Nis would also be addressed by DS Vice President Zivkovic and Nis SPO representative Miroslav Djordjevic. At least 20,000 people are expected to attend the rally, which will pass without any incidents.

Serbia: Commentary Accuses Draskovic of 'Treason'

AU2803211096 Belgrade VECERNJE NOVOSTI in Serbo-Croatian 26 Mar 96 p 4

[Commentary by Predrag Vitas: "Vuk the Informer"]

[FBIS Translated Text] If by any chance some of the leading people in major opposition parties in Germany, France, Britain, or the United States asked foreign countries to intervene in their countries because they dislike the existing regime, they would probably be put on trial by public prosecutors, at least on charges of involvement in activities threatening state security.

In our country, however, such a thing has happened and still nobody from the state bodies has reacted to the treacherous action of Vuk Draskovic [leader of the Serbian Renewal Movement]. It seems as if the leader of this parliamentary party is playing political war games and not that he is actually asking for a foreign intervention in his own country, openly admitting that he would help out from inside. That is to say, he has been and remains a potential collaborator, ready to serve anybody who would help him overthrow the regime.

To our judicial bodies, even though more than a week has passed since publication of a statement disclosing Draskovic's treacherous correspondence, this has still been a period for collecting impressions. They are collecting impressions instead of urging the public prosecutor to take immediate action to implement the Constitution and protect the country from foreign powers' attempts at invasion, which is openly demanded by a party leader. And he is the man who used to demolish Belgrade with his savage street politicizing five years ago, causing the death of two people. Even then, at the beginning, many people thought such actions were quite harmless.

Such a man in politics, which is best seen from this case, is ready to do anything for an ounce of power. For that reason, he wrote a letter to the foreign ministers of the United States, Russia, Germany, France, Great Britain, and Italy, inviting them and their countries to intervene in Serbia. Why was at least some gesture of protest or warning not forthcoming from our Foreign Ministry, even though they saw for themselves on the television how the German charge d'affaires, Gerhard Schrembgens [name as transliterated], personally received the letter? Or is it that, even in such places, Vuk's game is being underestimated?

I guess it is not normal that the embassies of the countries that are members of the Contact Group, even though they showered praises on Yugoslavia a couple of days ago in Moscow for its peacemaking policy and

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its contribution to the cessation of war in Bosnia, are now turning a blind eye, as if thinking that Draskovic's treacherous correspondence and the involvement of some of his diplomatic fans in all this can be concealed.

Well, that would really be unprecedented in the politically civilized world, if it were so. Besides, what Mr. Schrembgens is doing openly in Belgrade's cafeterias, no matter whether on his own initiative or with knowledge of his bosses, ought not to remain unnoticed. He as well as others who received Draskovic's letter certainly know how such an opposition leader would fare in their own countries. Because in their countries as well treason is considered to be the worst crime against the state and its citizens. Even if Vuk were to organize it!

Serbia: Muslims in Reception Center Have 'No Complaints'

LD2903144596 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1425 GMT 29 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, Mar. 29 (TANJUG)—Bosnian Muslims accommodated in a reception center in western Serbia live in satisfactory conditions, Jean Wenker of the International Committee of the Red Cross told the POLITKA EKSPRES daily on Friday.

They have food, heating and hot water, and the sick have medical care, said Wenker, speaking of the center, located on the Zlatibor mountain resort.

'It is good here and there are no problems. The food is good and what I am saying here I could say in the middle of Sarajevo,' said Adil Karic.

Karic is one of the 994 Muslims who fled to Yugoslavia from last July 29 to Aug. 2, said POLITIKA EKSPRES.

Most of them—770, had been carrying arms and were in Muslim military troops in Bosnia, but they deny it now, said the daily.

Karic commanded a detachment in the Zepa Brigade. Only he admits that he no longer wants to carry a gun and would rather be alive in Serbia, said the daily.

Most have gone abroad, via international migration organizations, and only 301 remain, said the daily.

Ramo Dardagan from the village of Grbavica near the town of Zvornik, eastern Bosnia, is waiting to leave for Austria, where his three sisters are. He said he had no complaints about the center and that everyone treated him fairly.

Eighteen-year-old Edvin Kamenica who is at the center with his father Ahmed, a heart patient, said he fled to Yugoslavia at his father's insistence, adding, 'It is good here, the food is great.'

POLITIKA EKSPRES quoted Fadilj Heljic, whose family is in Kakanj, central Bosnia, as saying he fled to Yugoslavia to save his life.

Serbia: State TV Accused of Selective Reporting

AU2703162996 Belgrade NIN in Serbo-Croatian 22 Mar 96 p 12

[Article by Jovanka Matic, expert at the Institute of Social Sciences: "A Permanent Campaign"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The most important news that all the international news agencies carried was the departure of tens of thousands of Serbs from Sarajevo. Over the past week, Radio-Television Serbia [RTS] did not carry a single report on this event. According to RTS's attitude, this event never happened. The RTS has carried just one report on the Serb Republic, namely the return of the Serbs to Mrkonjic Grad.

The activities of the Socialist Party of Serbia [SPS] are a major topic to which the RTS pays attention, whereas, of the other parties, attention is only being paid to the Yugoslav United Left [JUL] (two reports) and the Democratic Center (one report).

There are almost no news carried on Croatia, Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM], Vojvodina, Kosovo....

This reveals a selective pattern that RTS uses to present news from the world to its viewers. For citizens who watch only RTS information on the rest of the world is quite scant. The program makes note only of the progress of Milosevic's policy at all levels, the very successful return of our country to the international community, and news on the recovering economy.

RTS broadcast just one report on the 9 March rally, with Ivica Dacic, an SPS official, referring to it as if glorifying an act of destruction.

If we analyze the people appearing on RTS broadcasts, you can clearly spot the selective pattern and editorial concept, which reflects the nature of the media intervention in an event. This is called the molding of the public. In addition to a statement by the French ambassador that Yugoslavia must restore its presence in international institutions, people appearing on television are for the most part state officials who are at the same time the ruling party's leaders (Ratko Markovic, Branislav Ivkovic, Leposava Milicevic, Bosko Perosevic...). Dacic appeared two days in a row: once in excerpts of an interview given to POLITIKA and once in a direct interview given in the television studio, in which he spoke about

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the forthcoming SPS congress. This manner of appearing on television is rare and can be compared to 1992, when, during the election campaign then, the only person invited to appear on a Dnevnik newscast was Dafina Milanovic [owner of Dafiment bank].

By promoting certain personalities, the RTS defines the status of these and other personalities.

Through the Reports on the SPS broadcast (14 of them carried in seven days), the major television network combines state and political marketing. This means that party officials appear on television in the function of promoters of the state. In this way, the identification of the state with the party is reinforced. Normal state activities are presented by these spokesmen as the party's merit, and vice versa, based on apt propaganda founded on information obtained in advance. So for instance, President Milosevic, in both the first and the second election campaigns, never appeared as a participant in the campaign, but always as the president of the state paying working visits to certain parts of the country. In that way he was given much of the television time reserved for the campaign (the longest report in a Dnevnik newscast lasted 33 minutes on the eve of elections, even though he was never referred to as a candidate in the elections.)

The same method is being used now, as well, so a question may arise. Is this an election campaign? The answer could be that this is a permanent election campaign aimed at firmly establishing a standard of professional norms that will become normal to viewers in the course of time. Although the television does not tell us what to think, it does tell us what things we should think about by selecting certain events for promotion, thereby attaching social importance to them.

Many reports are carried without any particular reason (conversations with Ratko Markovic, who talked about the "legal rounding off of the system of functioning of the law-governed state," with Momir Stojkovic, dean of the Faculty of Political Sciences, or Ratomir Vico on ethnic minorities and the information system, a series of topics related to economics discussed without any particular reason...). In this way, RTS presents viewers with a list of priorities and keeps on promoting them.

The news on economic successes presents a similar situation, in which the news is repeated (the Chamber of Commerce receives a Chinese business delegation, and after three days the same image is broadcast with the statement that representatives of the Chamber of Commerce have talked with the delegation of a Chinese company...). The goal is to present an image of the success of Serbia and its economy.

If one analyzes just one Dnevnik newscast (of 27 February 1996), out of the 27 reports carried altogether (excluding sports), 19 reports referred to SPS activities. In five reports, the news of the day was carried: The UN Security Council suspends sanctions against the Serb Republic. In three reports, Milosevic is given credit for that. (The first report: "By this suspension, the promise made to Milosevic in Rome has been fulfilled." The second report: Reactions to the news in Montenegro—"An encouraging step, confirmation of the justifiability of Milosevic's policy, and the positive behavior of the Bosnian Serbs." The third report: Reactions from the world—"Acknowledgment of Milosevic's demand and recognition of the Bosnian Serbs' behavior.") The other two refer to a statement by Koljevic on the suspension of sanctions and that the FRY made a decision to lift sanctions against the Serb Republic.

There followed a series of news on protocol events (eight reports), economics, and international affairs, to which only four reports were dedicated.

Serbia: Survival of Independent Media Seen as Uncertain

AU2603103796 Hanau NOVA BOSNA in Serbo-Croatian 21 Mar 96 p 10

[Unattributed article: "The Appearance of an Idyll"]

[FBIS Translated Text] When the month comes to an end Vasko Diklic does not know how to pay the salaries. As the director of BETA agency, he can hardly cope with his small press agency. In May 1994, this former journalist of the regime's agency TANJUG, like the rest of the founders, invested his savings in this agency. Today he earns only 200 German marks a month, whereas at TANJUG he used to earn 2,000. "But, if nothing else, then at least we have the impression that we do our work properly and with enthusiasm."

Many journalists, like Diklic himself, many of them with great experience, ran away from the big Serb media. Many were fired when Slobodan Milosevic took control of the press. The rest left by themselves, refusing to take part in the national hysteria. Today those journalists work in the independent media, whose very survival is utterly uncertain.

The regime, which supervises mastodons like POLITIKA and the Serbian state television (RTS), conducts its propaganda policy in them. Instead of prohibiting independent media, the regime frequently puts pressure on them by financial or legal means. The police seldom confiscate their equipment or break into their workplaces. The goal is to reduce the number of their readers as much as possible, trying at the same time to maintain the appearance of pluralism, which Belgrade uses to

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boast before the international community, claiming that "there is more democracy in Belgrade than in Zagreb."

As a consequence of the state monopoly, the price of newsprint is twice as high for independent media. In the audio-visual media, the frequencies are given very seldom and they are very limited. In Belgrade there is far more independent media, but Milosevic's regime relies on provincial Serbia, where the regime press dominates.

"We get help from abroad, but it is not enough," Dara Pejovic, Belgrade-based reporter of the Montenegrin independent magazine MONITOR, says. Because of the lack of paper, MONITOR is printed in 10,000 copies, and it uses the help of the European Union, the French foundation "The Right To Speak" (Droit la Parole), as well as some foundations from the United States. In Belgrade the independent media enjoy the support of the U.S. banker of Hungarian origin, George Soros.

Like all journalists employed in the independent press, which opposed war adventures and the myth about Greater Serbia at the very beginning of the war, Dara Pejovic is also against them. "It is our task to defend the little democracy that exists," she says. "We cannot just stand there doing nothing in the presence of all those victims."

Montenegro

Montenegro: President Bulatovic Stresses Minority Rights

LD2803200296 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1953 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Podgorica, March 28 (TANJUG)—Montenegrin President Momir Bulatovic said on Thursday that ethnic minorities were fully integrated into life in that Yugoslav republic and that Montenegro had inherited a high level of tolerance.

Isolated incidents have been unanimously condemned regardless of differences between political parties and authorities have done their utmost to find those responsible for them, Bulatovic told a session of Montenegro's Council for the Protection of Rights of National and Ethnic Groups in Podgorica.

The rights of national and ethnic groups in Montenegro are not jeopardized. The only issue is the degree of realization of their rights guaranteed by the constitution and laws, the participants in the session said.

The session also discussed a poll conducted in September 1995 which revealed that about 80 percent of citizens in Montenegro maintain that national minorities are adequately treated in Montenegro.

The research was conducted on a sample of 1,000 citizens in eight municipalities.

Montenegrin Minister of Religion Slobodan Tomovic said that Montenegro had accepted all international norms in the field of ethnic minorities.

According to a 1991 population census, there were 615,000 citizens in Montengro: Montenegrins account for 62 percent, Muslims for 14.5 percent, Serbs for 9.3 percent and ethnic Albanians for 6.5 percent.

Montenegro: Ownership of Airports Reaffirmed

LD2603215496 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1558 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Podgorica, 26 Mar (SRNA/FoNet)—Zoran Djurisic, managing director of Montenegro-Airlines, today told the Podgorica daily POBJEDA that airports in Podgorica and Tivat "will belong to Montenegro."

"The airports in Podgorica and Tivat will belong to Montenegro, and Zika Petrovic, director general of the Yugoslav airlines, will have to accept that," Djurisic said, with reference to the recent statement by Petrovic that questioning the constitutional basis of the Yugoslav Airlines's claim that it owns the two airports was "pure nonsense."

Commenting on Petrovic's statement that "he will soon be ready to discuss the use of the airports with the Montenegrins," the manager of the first Montenegrin air company says:

"This relationship will change soon, and then we shall be ready to discuss with Mr. Petrovic the use of the airports in Podgorica and Tivat by the Yugoslav Airlines fleet. One has to know who is the host and who is the guest." [passage omitted]

Montenegro: 'Separatists' Seek To Split Orthodox Church

LD2803150996 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1350 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Podgorica, 28 Mar (SRNA)—Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Adriatic Coastal Region warned that "the two opposition separatist parties in Montenegro are rallying 'renegade' Serb priests in their desire to (?form) an autocephalous Montenegrin church."

"They are proclaiming that the [pro-Serb] Metropolitan of Cetinje is an occupier," Metropolitan Amfilohije said today at a meeting in Podgorica of the council for the protection of the rights of national and ethnic minorities

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which was chaired by Montenegro President Momir Bulatovic.

According to Amfilohije, "separatist parties in Montenegro are wrongly demanding the property of the Metropolitan of Cetinje." [passage omitted]

Petar Perkovic, head of the Catholic community in Montenegro, said that "several hundred Catholics have left this republic recently," and he stressed that "the authorities did not influence their decision."

Kosovo

Kosovo: U.S. Said To Urge 'Armed Rebellion' in Kosmet

AU2903151496 Belgrade POLITIKA EKSPRES in Serbo-Croatian 28 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Rade Negojevic: "They Are Suggesting Rebellion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Pristina—According to the Siptar [derogatory expression for ethnic Albanian] daily BUJKU, the U.S. Information Agency, USIA, conducted a survey in Kosmet [Kosovo-Metohija] in the period from 28 February to 3 March of this year, on the "ways of solving Kosovo's problems," which openly advocates yet another armed rebellion of Kosmet Siptars aimed at gaining "Kosovo's independence from Serbia!"

Whether the "survey" was conducted by USIA "survey-takers" or perhaps by agents of (another U.S. agency) the CIA is irrelevant. The important thing is that this warmongering and anti-Serb "survey" was organized—according to BUJKU—by the U.S. Government. As for our assessment that the "survey" is in the interest of Siptar separatist demands and supports armed rebellion in Kosmet, we did not need specialized analysts to arrive at this conclusion.

Namely, the basic goal of the "survey's" initiators was to make its "results" a clear message to all Siptars; that they succeeded in this is evident in the part of the text titled "Over 90 Percent of Siptars Support an Independent Kosovo." One of USIA's reports claims that there is a realistic likelihood of tension increasing in Kosovo owing to the extremely contradictory stances of the Serbs and Siptars. The survey, a first of its kind for the U.S. Government, claims that 92 percent of Siptars support Kosovo's independence, BUJKU claims, and reports the essential "result" of the said "survey!"

"The support for independence is such that almost all Siptars, 94 percent, believe that it is worth dying for Kosovo's independence from Serbia!"

Therefore, armed rebellion and a bloodbath are being openly suggested to the Siptars! We will not comment on whether the U.S. Government really wants this, but we will mention that BUJKU insists several times that the "survey" was conducted by "U.S. Government experts!"

Furthermore, if their suggestion of an armed rebellion fails, the so-called surveyors have openly suggested mass demonstration of Kosmet Siptars, which is evident from the "response" of the 748 "polled" Siptars that "85 percent of Siptars would participate in demonstrations in support of Kosovo's independence." As for the 250 "polled" Serbs, "all Serbs, that is, 99 percent of them, oppose Kosovo's independence and its unification with Albania." We do not doubt the sincerity of 99 percent of Kosmet Orthodox believers, but it is not clear whether the 1 percent of "polled Serbs" includes Ibrahim Rugova, whose Serbian roots have already been written about?!

The initiators and financiers of this "surveying" and warmongering expedition in Kosmet should be asked to provide the real answer to who wants this information and why.

Kosovo: Ethnic Albanians Ignore Serbia's Statehood Day

LD2803230896 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2251 GMT 28 Mar 96

["Pool" item by Djordje Jevtic]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pristina, March 28 (TANJUG)—Continuing their practice of not recognizing legal authorities, ethnic Albanian political organizations and Albanian-language press in Serbia's southern province of Kosovo-Metohija ignored Serbia's statehood day, March 28.

The 1989 constitutional amendments and especially the 1990 Serbian Constitution prevented Kosovo-Metohija and Serbia's northern province of Vojvodina from acting as states within a state, which was made possible under the former Yugoslavia's 1974 Constitution.

A vast majority of ethnic Albanian deputies in the then parliaments of Serbia and Kosovo-Metohija supported the amendments. Out of the 190 delegates in the Kosovo-Metohija parliament, only 14 were against and four abstained.

A strong ethnic Albanian separatist movement, which has been acting in Kosovo-Metohija for decades, aims at detaching the province from Serbia and Yugoslavia and annexing it to neighbouring Albania.

Instead of accepting the fact that Kosovo-Metohija is an unalienable part of Serbia and participating in realizing all democratic and national rights, ethnic Albanian

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secessionists still deceive their compatriots with an 'independent and neutral state of Kosovo,' trying to convince them that the alleged 'state' exists.

Many of those who participated in the 'creation' of the alleged 'state' or supported it on the basis of the 'Kacanica constitution' of the so-called 'republic of Kosovo,' which was illegally adopted by ethnic Albanian separatist leaders who do not recognize Serbia's legal authorities, no longer believe in these delusions.

After this separatist act with no legal value, those who participated in it went abroad and formed a 'government in exile,' which broke up in the meantime.

On the domestic ground, the role of the 'state organs' was taken by the populist separatist organization Democratic Alliance of Kosovo, which declared its leader Ibrahim Rugova 'president' of the so-called 'republic of Kosovo.'

Some ethnic Albanian analysts and Rugova's 'opponents' say that Rugova has reduced his 'state' to a few square metres at the former Kosovo Literary Society, which he usurped while he presided it, that he has imposed single-mindedness and that he does not allow the constituting of parliament and other organs on the basis of the 'Kacanica constitution.'

Adam Demaci is now trying to enter the 'parliament' by force in order to try to 'revive' it, while Rugova's biggest critic Redzep Cosja openly ridicules the games with the 'state of Kosovo' and its 'results.'

Analysts in the province's centre of Pristina believe that there is a mess in the top of the ethnic Albanian secessionist movement after the Dayton Peace Agreement and after key international factors made it clear that they do not support the secession of Kosovo-Metohija and that ethnic Albanians should solve their problems only within Serbia.

Serbia's new constitution has not denied anybody's rights, including the rights of national minorities. On the contrary, these rights were enhanced by the fact that national minorities can elect their representatives in a democratic way, form their cultural, national and other institutions and be educated in their mother tongue.

However, under the influence of their separatist leaders, some ethnic Albanians do not use these rights.

Kosovo: Lifting of Visas to Albania Effective 30 Apr

AU2803205796 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The exit visa regime for travelling to Albania, revoked by the government of the self-proclaimed Yugoslavia (Serbia-Montenegro) on 14 March, will be in force till 30 April, the Serbian daily POLITIKA reported today (Tuesday) [26 March].

The decree of the "Yugoslav" Government will be published in No. 13 of the OFFICIAL GAZETTE, due to appear on 22 April, POLITIKA says, adding that eight more days are to pass before the decision on revocation of the exit visa requirement comes into force.

The exit visa regime, introduced in 1981 by the then FRY Government, has brought the communication of the Albanians in former Yugoslavia with their fellow ethnics in Albania to a virtual standstill over the past fifteen years.

Hundreds of Albanians who have travelled in the past few years to Albania have had their passports revoked or have otherwise been punished.

While the exit visa has been revoked on paper, it is assumed the Serbian-led two-member Yugoslav Federation is now thinking ways of effectively hampering free movement of Albanians from Kosova.

The Albanian language BUJKU newspaper quoted on 18 March Serb border authorities at the Vermica (near Prizren) as saying they were expecting instructions on how the revocation of the exit visa to Albania was to be implemented!

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